

The Marne Express

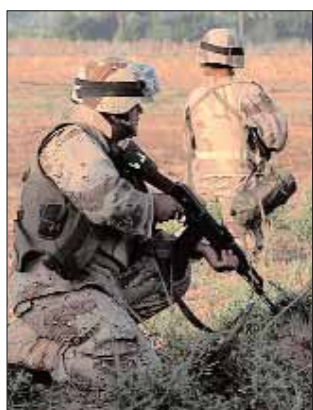
"Mission, Soldiers, Teamwork"

Volume 2, Issue 6

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad

May 8, 2005

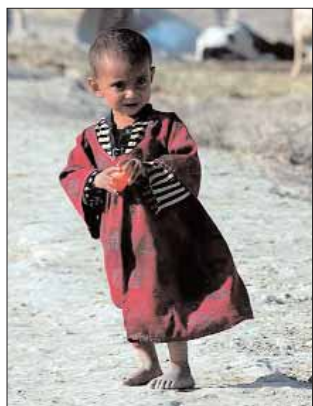
In this week's
*Marne
Express*



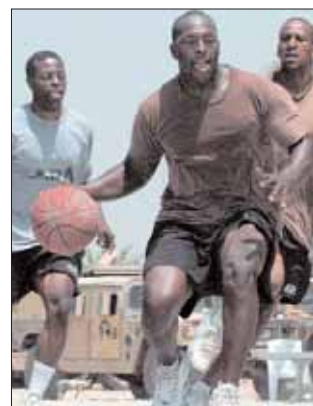
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Village MEDCAP
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B-ball tournament
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No place to hide ...



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

An illumination round fired from the Paladin track vehicle descends toward the ground in the distance near Samarra April 22.

'Glory Guns' light up desert night

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT PAO

In the middle of the night, a loud explosion rips through the darkness.

A few seconds later, and a few kilometers away, the ground is lit up by a light in the sky.

Enemies who were depending on the cover of darkness

now have no place to hide.

This is made possible by Soldiers of B Battery, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery Regiment.

"Tonight we are going to fire two different kinds of rounds," said 1st Lt. John Dorffeld, a B Battery 1/41 FA platoon leader. "We have two guns we are taking with us, and each one will fire in a dif-

ferent direction, giving us a good lateral spread."

"Basically we were given a mission to supply illumination coverage for the (Iraqi ministry of interior) during operation Forsyth Park," said Sgt. 1st Class Mark Lowry, B Battery 1/41 platoon sergeant.

Illumination coverage lights up the area for ground troops so they have more situ-

ational awareness, Lowry said. "We were taking back the night from the insurgents."

The illumination round has several different purposes, the most important being the identification of enemy targets, Lowry said.

"We had a good function of all the illumination rounds,

See GUNS, page 14

4/64, 1/1 IA team up, take on responsibilities in Baghdad

Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP PROSPERITY, Iraq — Staff Sgt. Juan Serrano, Spc. Noel Mata and Spc. Michael Foutch, all from B Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, are used to riding around in a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, but these days, they've had to get used



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

A Soldier from 1/1 IA looks out over the Tigris toward Baghdad while pulling perimeter security at a dumping ground in the city during a routine patrol with 4/64 Armor April 8.

to something a little better suited to the streets of Baghdad.

In their old crew, Mata, from Puce Crossing, Mich., was the Bradley's driver, and Foutch, from Cumberland, Ky., was the vehicle's gunner.

"Last time we were here to fight a war and that was it," explained Sgt. 1st Class Harold Hill, a D Company, 4/64 Armor platoon sergeant. "Nobody was friendly. Now we're working hand in hand with the Iraqi Army," Hill said.

Now, however, the positions have shifted with the mission: Serrano drives an M1114 up-armored humvee while Mata mans the hatch and Foutch rides along to provide extra security.

And instead of fighting against the Iraqis, the Soldiers are working with them.

Serrano, Mata, Foutch and their fellow B Co. Soldiers are now attached to D Co., 4/64, and most of their time is spent training and on patrol with the Soldiers of 1st Brigade, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

"We go out with the Iraqis and let them do most of the patrol mission, so eventually they can do it on their own," Serrano, a section leader from Levittown, Puerto Rico, said. "So far, the IA's doing good; they seem to be motivated and willing to learn."

Mata and Foutch agreed that the trainees have come a long way, and the daily missions have been instrumental to that progress.

During one routine patrol April 8, the IA Soldiers accompanied their U.S. counterparts to various areas in Baghdad.

"Today we're doing a joint patrol with the Iraqi Army, patrolling the river road route on the border of the Tigris,"

See PATROL, page 14

Marne Six Sends

Keep your focus on the mission

Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr.
Task Force Baghdad commander

Task Force Baghdad continues to aggressively take the fight to the enemy.

Since the Transition of Authority, we have provided a safer environment from which our partners in the Iraqi Security Forces have been able to learn and grow in strength and capability.

The Iraqi Security Forces in Baghdad have provided critical forces to our team in operations to secure and safeguard the Ashoura and Arba'iniyyah religious holidays, the Sadr peaceful protest and 17 seatings of the Transitional National Assembly.

However, we must remain focused on our MISSION.

Your actions will keep the enemy off-balance and reacting to us, while reassuring the population.

Our Soldiers are our most valued asset. Continue to look out for each other.

Ensure you wear your protective equipment on missions.

Our protective equipment helps to mitigate risk, reduce injuries and has undoubtedly saved the lives of many of our buddies.

Remind your battle buddy to use the equipment ... take care of our Soldiers.

Safe operation of our equipment is still important. Understand your equipment's capabilities and weak points.

Together with your teammates ensure your equipment is properly maintained and safety considerations are understood. Teamwork can assist in preventing accidents.

Together we can save lives and keep equipment in the fight.

We will continue our mission of combating terrorism in Iraq while training Iraqi Security Forces.

Our teams have shown the enemy that we can adapt to any tactical change and then move a step ahead by taking the fight to him.

We will remain flexible, keep operations simple and build on our successes.

It is impressive to see the daily results of Soldiers who know their mission, know they are well-trained and well-led, and know they dominate the battle field.

Mission ... Soldiers ... Teamwork

"Rock of the Marne!"

Unsung heroes

Command Sgt. Major William M. Grant
Task Force Baghdad command sergeant major

What fuels a war machine?

We speak of combat power relative to tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, gunships, etc. ... I submit to you that Soldiers rank higher.

A shout out to the Task Force Baghdad cooks and dining facility personnel!

We should all be proud of all our food service personnel serving across the theater.

Our Army's food service program has continued to maintain pace with the ever-changing military environment.

I can tell you I'm overly impressed with the professionalism, commitment, dedication to duty and customer service-associated disposi-

tion of all these Soldiers.

The first noticeable thing you see is the hard work placed into constructing the outside eating area build-up.

Please take the opportunity to thank the staff: Master Sgt. Shelton Coppett, Mr. Lee and both Soldiers, contractors and local nationals for their world-class support.

In closing, you can help support the team at the DFAC by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Show your ID card
- Do not carry AAFES bags in to carry out beverages
- Don't bring in backpacks in any form

Thanks again for your cooperation and support!



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner

Top left : Spc. Jarrod Marshall, a Headquarters and Headquarters Support Company, Special Troops Battalion food service specialist, performs head count and crowd control at the Camp Liberty dining facility.

Above left: Pvt. Krystal Burgess and Sgt. Shakira Gray, HHSC, STB food service specialists, serve on the main line at the Liberty DFAC.

Right: Spc. Sonia Campbell, a Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Soldier Support Battalion food service specialist, dishes out a hot meal for Soldiers at the Liberty DFAC.

The Marne Express

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The Word on the Street

What are some thoughts or reflections you'd like to share about your mother?



"My favorite memories of my Mom have a lot to do with the way our home life was, and what she did to make it special – for instance, her cooking!"

Sgt. Anthony Sotomayor
HHC, 1/69 Inf.
Brooklyn, N.Y.

"My mom and I didn't see each other for almost 15 years. One day I found her at work and we've been building a relationship and growing closer ever since."



Spc. Michael Erchul
HHB, 1/141 FA
Milwaukee, Wis.



"If I could be home for Mother's Day this year, I'd buy her some roses and prepare her a nice meal, and have the family there for a gathering. I would just make sure she knows how much I miss her."

Sgt. Eddie Bernard
A Co., 2/156 Inf.
Rayne, La.

"My mom went the extra mile for me while I was growing up in school. She drove an hour everyday to bring me to private school, because she felt that's where I would get the best education."



Spc. Jolie Darbonne
C Co., 199th FSB
Breaux Bridge, La.



"My mom was always the person I could go to, and now that my sister has a child and my wife and I just had a baby, I have a whole new respect and outlook on motherhood."

Spc. James Castille
A Co., 3/156 Inf.
Iowa, La.

Happy Mother's Day!

Motherly inspiration lives on through generations

Capt. Dominique Butler

G-4 battle captain

When I was asked to share my Mother's Day memories for this edition of the Marne Express, I was very flattered.

I wanted to express my relationship with the matriarchs in my life and touch a little bit on what most of our mothers have meant to all of us.

In most Black families the matriarch of the family is the person who holds the family together. My family was no different.

My grandmother served that position well. Her name was Mary Helen Carroll.

I can remember having Sunday dinners every week. She would spend all day

cooking for the family; she let me help most of the time. We cooked collard greens, baked macaroni and cheese, ham, fried/baked chicken, cabbage, mashed potatoes, turkey with all the trimmings, banana pudding, cornbread and I could go on.

Our family would all meet at Grandma's coming from all over the Bronx and pack up in my grandparents' small 3 bedroom apartment. At any given time there were 10-15 folks for dinner.

We had been having Sunday dinners at Grandma's house since I was 3 years old. My grandmother was my 1st inspiration. She was the first in her family to graduate from college. She had a degree in Social work.

Mary Helen taught me a lot in the kitchen and in the classroom. On Feb. 26, 1991, the Lord called her home. Losing the foundation of our family took a toll on us all.

This is when my second inspiration stepped in.

When the Lord called my grandmother home I was 13 years old. My mom was 30. My mom, Renee, was the second-eldest of four children, and the first female born.

Of the four, she was the closest to Grandma. The responsibilities of funeral arrangements, taking care of my grandfather and keeping the family together rested upon her shoulders. Not to mention, she had to raise two children of her own alone.

I watched in amazement the

way my mom put her grieving aside to help get her family through this ordeal. All I could say was "I don't think I could handle it."

I was impressed at my mom's strength and love she had for all of us. She kept my grandmother's Sunday tradition going as long as she could.

My mom is still the glue that keeps our family together. She has been my constant model for success.

My mom graduated from high school and then had me. Needless to say, she was a young mother.

She had to mature fast and sacrifice her college dreams to take care of me. She always put my education above all else. My mom sent me to

Catholic school for junior high and high school.

She encouraged (forced) me to go to college and said we would figure out a way to pay for it. My mom worked for the same company, Apple Bank, for the last 27 years. She started out as a bank teller and now is Senior Vice President of her branch.

Perseverance and Determination is what my mom embodies and what she taught her children.

When I graduated from Morgan State University in 1999, I gave the senior class address and thanked my mom for her support. Now I can return the favor – my mom started college last year and is working on her degree in finance.

“All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does; that's his.” – Oscar Wilde

“A mother is not a person to lean on but a person to make leaning unnecessary.” – Dorothy C. Fisher

“The world is full of women blindsided by the unceasing demands of motherhood, still flabbergasted by how a job can be terrific and torturous.”

– Anna Quindlen

“The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for 30 years she served the family nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found.” – Calvin Trillin

“Some are kissing mothers and some are scolding mothers, but it is love just the same.” – Pearl Buck

“THE ART OF MOTHERING IS TO TEACH THE ART OF LIVING TO CHILDREN.” – ELAIN HEFFNER

“‘Mother’ is the name for God in the lips and hearts of little children.”
– William Makepeace Thackeray

“Sooner or later we all quote our mothers.”
– Bern Williams

“Mothers are fonder than fathers of their children because they are more certain they are their own.” – Aristotle

“No matter how old a mother is, she watches her middle-aged children for signs of improvement.” – Florida Scott-Maxwell

“Motherhood is a wonderful thing – what a pity to waste it on children.” – Judith Pugh

“A father may turn his back on his child ... but a mother's love endures through all.” – Washington Irving



Staff Sgt. Matthew Hodges, right, 3rd ACR, sheds tears during the memorial service for Pfc. Joseph Knott held at Camp Striker, Iraq April 21. Hodges was Knott's PSD platoon sergeant. Knott was killed April 17 by an IED while on a convoy.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks

Memorial honors 3rd ACR scout

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks
3rd ACR PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – As Pfc. Joseph Labian Knott's name was called thrice in the symbolic roll call by 1st Sgt. Rodney Greene during the memorial service to honor the fallen trooper, not a sound could be heard.

That is, except for the chiming of Knott's dog tags clanging in the cool, dusk breeze during the event held April 21.

Knott, assigned to the Regimental Headquarters, Headquarters "Remington" Troop, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, was killed in action April 17 when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device.

At the service, Col. H.R. McMaster, 3rd ACR commander, spoke about the cavalry scout who served on his Personal Security Detachment.

"We are here to honor and say goodbye to one of our Brave Rifles brothers, a great cavalry trooper and a fine man," McMaster said. "On 17 April during operations in the South Baghdad area, he made the ultimate sacrifice to bring peace to this difficult region, defeat the forces of terrorism and hatred, and permit children, both in Iraq and in our own nation, to live free of fear."

Concluding his remarks, McMaster looked at the gathering of troopers at the service, some donning the traditional Stetsons and spurs, and made a promise on behalf of the first 3rd ACR trooper killed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

"We should also draw strength from Joseph Knott's example," McMaster said. "I, for one, will do my best to follow his example – to put fellow troopers before myself, to do my very best to win this fight against terrorists and the enemies of freedom, to maintain my sense of humor and enjoy the company of my fellow troopers."

Knott joined the Army from Yuma, Ariz., with ambitions of joining the Special Forces. He was remembered for earning the respect of his fellow troopers on the PSD and his dedication to duty.

His company commander shared his initial conversation with him upon his arrival in October to the unit back at Fort Carson, Colo.

"When I reviewed his welcome center in-processing packet, I noticed his comment in the 'comments section,'" said Capt. David Rozelle, RHHT company commander. "He had written, 'Everything was fine, but I would have liked some more time to have some fun.' Laughing, I asked him what he meant."

"He did not crack a smile but said, 'I knew that once I was with the Cav we would be working hard to get ready for war.' He was right."

Troopers of the historic unit were deeply moved when one of Knott's closest friends and member of the PSD came to the podium and delivered a personal, heartfelt tribute.

Pfc. Shawn Hatley compiled a list of memories of "Knotty" from other members of the PSD and comprised a speech.

"He showed loyalty and respect to his platoon, he showed honor and integrity in his personality; character in how he carried himself, he showed personal courage and selfless service every time we left the gate," Hatley said. "Knotty Boy always had a tune and kept a tune. He loved music. Every time you saw Knott, he was always singing and nodding his head. And when you would look at him, he would just smile and keep on singing."

As the breeze picked up, Knott's dog tags chimed a bit more, reminding his fellow troopers there was still a tune left to hear and a song to sing.

"If I could sing I would sing louder," McMaster said.

Knott is survived by his father Jerry, his mother Pamela, his sisters Susan and



Above: Knott's identification tags clang against his M16A2 rifle during the memorial service to honor the slain trooper. Right: Knott's Kevlar, rifle and dog tags are displayed for the more than 200 troopers attending his memorial service.



Above: Knott's boots are laced with his spurs and decorated with coins. Right: Pfc. Joseph Labian Knott, 3rd ACR scout, in an undated photo prior to his promotion.



1/3 BTB saddened over loss of peer

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

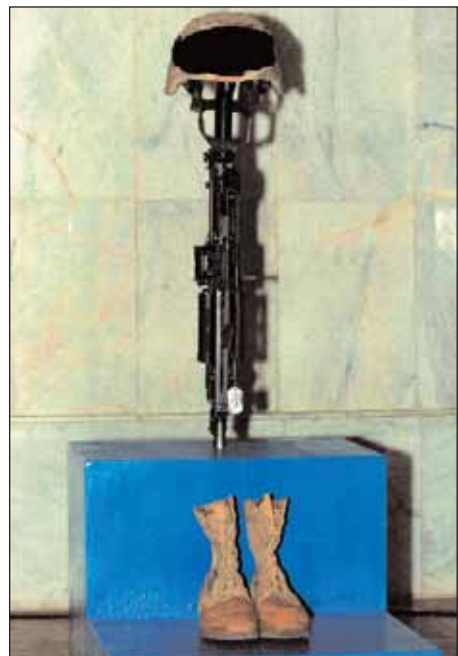
1st BCT PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DAGGER, Iraq — A Soldier's life was stolen from the 1st Brigade Combat Team when an insurgent fired a rocket at the FOB April 15.

Cpl. Aleina Ramirez, a military policewoman and a member of 3rd Infantry Division's 1st Brigade Troops Battalion personal security detachment, was killed during the attack.

This was the first time insurgents hit FOB Dagger since the arrival of 1st BCT, said Staff Sgt. Marquis Mills-Cooper, a 1/3 BTB intelligence analyst.

Soldiers who knew and worked directly with Ramirez have fond memories of her personality and character.



Ramirez's boots, helmet, rifle and ID tags are displayed in a place of honor at her memorial service April 21.

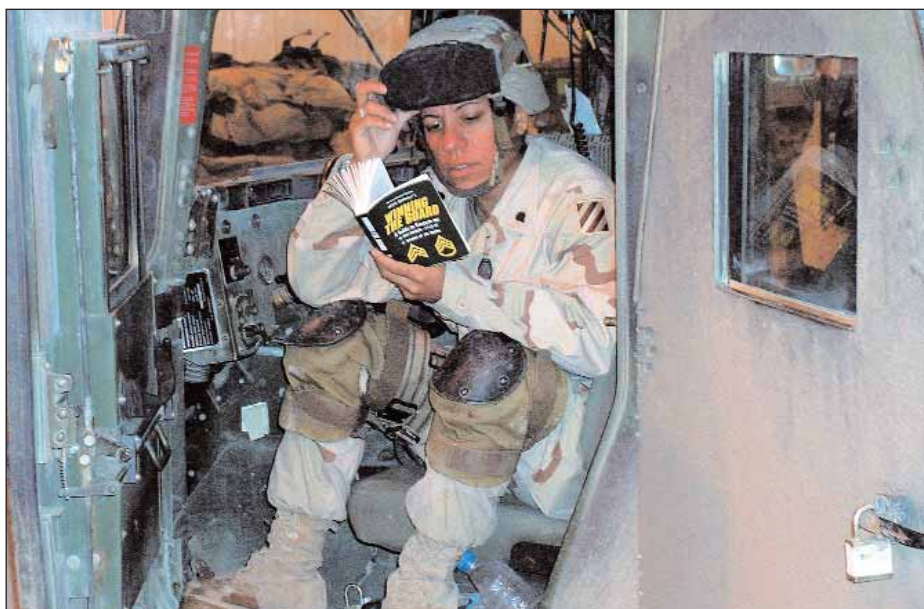
"I met (Ramirez) in Kuwait, and we hit it off really fast because we had a lot in common," said Pvt. Megan Zeigler, a 1/3 BTB information systems operator analyst. "When I think of (Ramirez), I always want to think of loyalty right away. She was a very loyal and trustworthy person. When you were around her, anything that was wrong, she would uplift you. She was always happy. We were the only two female (squad automated weapon) gunners on this FOB. She faced danger every day. She never complained. She would go out and sit on top of the vehicle and be vulnerable. She would have done anything for anybody. She was the strongest Soldier I think I had ever met. She makes me want to be strong and brave."

Ramirez inspired the Soldiers around her with her positive attitude.

"The thing I admired about her most was the fact that she could never complain about anything she had to get done," Pfc. Nia Rock, a 1/3 BTB supply specialist. "As a Soldier, if she was told something on short notice, if she had been up all night and just hitting the bed, no matter when it was she was always prepared. She could never be late even if she wanted to, that was not an option. The littlest things made her happy, even eating something of her choice that day would make her smile. When I asked her about being on the PSD team and wanted to know if she wanted to stay on it, her reply was, 'If my team stays, I want to stay.'"

Soldiers who worked with Ramirez only briefly were still able to see something special about her.

"I didn't know her from a hole in the wall when I first got here," said Spc. Keith Brescher, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st BCT. "She worked with me and always brought me chow when I couldn't leave. She never complained about doing it. She was a very giving per-



Photos by Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Cpl. Aleina Ramirez, 1/3 BTB, studies for the promotion board between missions. Ramirez was killed by enemy rocket fire at FOB Dagger April 15.

son."

As a member of the PSD team, she is remembered by 1/3 BTB commander Lt. Col. Douglas Victor as an individual who had great potential and accomplished much during her short time in Iraq.

"As an integral part of the Desert Cat Battalion's PSD, Ramirez skillfully drove for crew number three," Victor said. "In just a short time, she already executed (more than) 125 patrols on the dangerous roads of Iraq."

Ramirez was studying for the E-5 promotion board. Her leaders were fully confident in her ability to assume the responsibilities inherent in that role.

"Ramirez was a quiet professional and fully capable to be a sergeant," Victor said.

Victor believes that despite the loss of Ramirez, his unit has pulled

together, and remembers what kind of Soldier she was.

"While our unit is terribly saddened by the ultimate sacrifice of Cpl. Ramirez, the Desert Cats are a better unit because of her," Victor said.

A memorial ceremony was held for Ramirez April 21, and featured a display of her boots, assigned weapon, identification tags and helmet. Chaplain (Capt.) Nathan Klein delivered the memorial meditation.

Ramirez's company and battalion commanders also made remarks. The ceremony was hosted by Col. Mark McKnight, 1st BCT commander, and was also attended by Task Force Liberty commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto.

Ramirez is survived by her father Wilfredo Ramirez, her mother Aleina Ramirez, and her brother Joel Ramirez.

1/184 'Nightstalkers' pay respects to fallen comrade

Pfc. Dan Balda

4th BCT PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq — Task Force Baghdad Soldiers paid tribute to a fallen comrade at a memorial service here April 9.

Cpl. Glenn Watkins, A Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, was killed in action April 5 when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device.

At the service, Lt. Col. Patrick Frey, 1/184th "Nightstalkers" commander, spoke about Watkins' children. One of his sons is serving with the 82nd Airborne Division, another son just recently joined the Navy and his daughter is a member of the Israeli Civil Defense Forces. His youngest son is home schooled.

"His children go out into life armed with the best examples in life that American culture has to offer," Frey said. "He was a quiet man, but we remember him for his humor. He was Jewish, but he loved Christian rock and roll. He was a Soldier, but he was no warmonger. His leadership, bearing and sacrifice served as the perfect model for every Soldier here."

Watkins' company commander shared his last conversation with the man who was remembered for his smile.

"The last time I saw him was the evening of April 4 when he was getting water for his patrol," said Capt. Keith Haviland. "I asked him how he was doing. He replied, 'I am doing great, sir. No sarcasm, no facetiousness. It was just 100 percent genuine. This is the way I will always remember him, a 'Cool Hand Luke' smile

and a passion for the brothers he served."

Staff Sgt. Steve Nunez met Watkins in 1998, when he first served with 1/184. This time around, Nunez was his squad leader.

Watkins signed on to stay in Iraq another year to fight with his old friends in the unit.

"Us old timers were glad to have him back," Nunez said. "He always got the job done, asking for nothing in return except a cup of coffee. I'll miss you bro, see you when I get home."

Cpl. Ricardo Briquela, one of Watkins' best friends in the unit said Watkins put his life on the line every day because he knew it was the right thing to do.

Briquela then read a letter Watkins wrote in case he didn't make it home safely:

"Please do not despair nor grieve for me. Be proud and talk highly of me for I have done what I was called to do. As a young boy watching 'The Green Berets' with John Wayne, I knew a life in the military was my life and possibly my death. I feared not the unknown and so I set forth on this journey knowing full well what it might mean. I must go for now, stand firm and take up this fight. Oh yes, I intend to fight hard for I have reason to come home. If you are reading this then you know I have failed at my task. Only life threw me a curve, a man seldom has a choice in the manner of his death. It is only the manner in which he lives that is a mark of a true warrior."

Brizuela added, "I think he fits the bill. He was my friend, I will miss you, I will see you when I see you."

Watkins is survived by his wife, Anne, his two sons, Andrew and John, and his daughter Alicia.



Pfc. Dan Balda

Above: A Soldier assigned to 1/184 Inf. bows his head during prayer at Cpl. Glenn Watkins' memorial service April 9. Inset: Cpl. Glenn Watkins.

Young MP remembered as caring, full of spirit

Pfc. Laura M. Bigenho
42nd MP Bde. PAO

CAMP FALCON, Iraq – For many military police Soldiers, traveling up and down the notoriously dangerous roads of Baghdad day after day is very difficult – both physically and emotionally.

However, nothing can compare to the heartbreak and torment felt when having to say a final “goodbye” to a model Soldier and a wonderful friend who positively influenced the lives of so many of her comrades.

Soldiers from 170th Military Police Company, 504th Military Police Battalion, 42nd Military Police Brigade, of Fort Lewis, Wash., were given precious time to pay their last respects to their fallen friend during a memorial service held April 22.

Pfc. Sam W. Huff, a military policewoman with 170th MP Company, died of injuries sustained in Baghdad when an improvised explosive device detonated near the humvee she was driving April 17.

Quickly filling the seats and lining the walls at every available space, Huff’s fellow Soldiers crammed inside the chapel.

Attendees chatted and reflected on her short yet vivacious life while modern dance music, such as the Black Eyed Peas’ “Hey Mama,” and Outkast’s “Hey Ya,” played in the background. Such upbeat and festive music was suitable for this young woman whose passions in life included dancing.

Lt. Col. James Switzer, 504th battalion commander, said he knew Huff within two weeks of her arrival at the 170th.

He described her as being someone who could light up a room with merely a smile.



Capt. Robert Matthews, 170th MP Co. commander, grabs Pfc. Sam W. Huff’s ID tags, pausing to remember his fallen Soldier.

“Pfc. Huff was a unique individual. She could lighten the mood of any hardcore (noncommissioned officer) and bring a smile to even an old warrior’s face,” Switzer said.

Capt. Robert Matthews, 170th MP Co. commander, agreed, adding that the vibrant Huff was like a little sister to many of her peers, especially to the guys in her platoon.

“It’s true that we’re all Soldiers, but to the guys in first platoon, Sam was almost like a kid sister that they wanted to protect. She got along well with everyone.

“Her good nature, her constant smile and winning attitude were contagious,” he continued. “She took pride in her work and demanded excellence from herself.”

If there was anybody who could sincerely attest for Huff’s “happy-go-lucky” personality, as well as her love of being a Soldier, it was squad leader Sgt. Sam James. Huff served as James’ driver. Together, they participated in countless missions; many of which involved long days at Iraqi police stations.

“You could tell that her parents raised her well; not only by her strong morals, but underneath that shell of a beautiful lady was a backbone made of steel.”

James described a non-typical situation in which a 12-hour mission ended up turning into a 3-day operation. Huff, being “the kind of Soldier who made being in the Army fun,” said James, responded to his orders without any question or hesitation.

When James broke the news to her about having to stay for an undetermined amount of time, he instructed her to assist a fellow Soldier with getting the

necessary equipment onto a rooftop.

James recalled Huff’s immediate reply.

“She said, ‘How much ammo does he need, sergeant? How much ammo does he need?’” Stunned at her lack of complaint, James told her what was needed and that was the end of it.

“She walked away with a smile and did her duty. That’s the kind of Soldier Pfc. Huff was.”

Living her life to its fullest, Huff “put her whole heart into everything she did,” said Pfc. Ashley Lathers, one of Huff’s close friends and a fellow first platoon Soldier.

“The girl would dance anywhere she would get a chance. She’d dance with great pride and great confidence that most people lacked.”

Huff was also the type of person who would always put her own happiness aside so that others would be happy, remembered Lathers.

“All she wanted was to be that Soldier that everyone counted on. Little did she know that what she was striving for, she already had.”

Pfc. Sam W. Huff will be laid to rest in Virginia’s Arlington National Cemetery April 29.

“An appropriate resting place for this young hero,” added Switzer.

No doubt Huff will be dancing with the angels.



Pfc. Sam Huff, 170th MP Co., flashes a grin before a mission. She died April 17 from injuries sustained by an IED detonation.

Leave
no
Soldier
behind

Sgt. Matthew Maupin

“I will not leave a fallen comrade”

These well known words from the Warrior Ethos ring true for Sgt. Matt Maupin.

Maupin is an Army Reserve Soldier from the 724th Transportation Company who was captured April 9, 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2.

Sgt. Maupin – we are still looking for you and we will find you. You have not been forgotten.



Search uncovers weapons stockpiles

Staff Sgt. Craig Zentkovich
2nd BCT PAO

MADAIN, Iraq – Following an early-morning cordon and search of a city south of Baghdad, Iraqi Security Forces supported by Task Force Baghdad Soldiers, discovered weapons caches at two separate locations Monday.

Prior to the search, Madain (also known as Salman Pak) had for months been known as a terrorist staging ground

for improvised explosive device attacks against Iraqi and U.S. forces.

Items discovered and later destroyed by an explosive ordinance disposal team from Task Force Baghdad's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, included more than 50 82mm mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and launchers, rockets, high-explosive artillery shells, and a pair of 250-pound Russian-made bombs.

Additionally, dozens of rigged IED initiation devices and spools of wire

were found in a nearby shack.

A sports utility vehicle at the site contained three 155mm artillery shells wired and packed with additional explosives.

Iraqi and U.S. forces provided security of the sites while EOD removed the threat.

"The mission was very successful," said Lt. Col. Michael Johnson, commander of 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment. "The (Iraqi forces) were able to secure Salman

Pak ... and find a large weapons cache where IED vehicle bombs were being manufactured."

In the town center, Iraqi Security Forces, numbering in the hundreds, celebrated after reclaiming a police station that had not been occupied by Iraqi Police personnel for months.

"The U.S. forces had a very small part in the operation," Johnson said. "(3/7 Cav.) served as a quick reaction force, if necessary. This was an all Iraqi-planned and executed mission."



Above: An Iraqi Army machine gunner maintains security of his sector during the early-morning Iraqi security forces mission in Salman Pak April 18.

Left: IA Soldiers, with the support of 3/7 Cav., secure an open area north of Salman Pak. Both units served as a quick reaction force for the Iraqi security forces assault on the insurgents in the town.

PST provides primary personnel protection at Taji

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – A Blackhawk touches down at Camp Taji's airfield, and a man with stars on his collar exits the aircraft. Meanwhile, in the distance Soldiers are scanning the perimeter.

"Welcome to Camp Taji, sir," says a Soldier from the welcoming committee, accompanying him to a sport utility vehicle.

The vehicle with the general exits the flight line along with cars with other VIPs.

Around the convoy are Soldiers in humvees with mounted crew-served weapons, scanning the areas outside to ensure the official party's safety.

These Soldiers, whose continuing diligence and focus are

necessary for these individuals' protection, are members of the Aviation Brigade Personal Security Team.

When high-profile people come to Camp Taji, whether it is a U.S. general officer, Iraqi diplomat, or celebrity performer, the eight-man PST ensures their protection — a very important job, according to Staff Sgt. Javier J. Blanco, noncommissioned officer in charge of the PST.

"We provide security for any VIP who comes to this area of operations," Blanco said. "We have a plan of protection depending on what they are doing, where they are going, or what route they are taking."

Sgt. Olatunde Olatunji, a PST crew serve weapons gunner in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Avn. Bde., understands the weight of

his team's responsibilities.

"We pick up VIPs from the airfield, and we know we have to do whatever is necessary to protect them," said Olatunji. "We are all very serious about our job because the life of a person is in our hands, and we cannot afford to make any mistakes."

When someone under its security is on the move, the PST ensures his safety along the route.

"We are on the lookout for anything suspicious or out of place," Olatunji said. "We always have our eye out for people watching or suspi-

"We are all very serious about our job because the life of a person is in our hands, and we cannot afford to make any mistakes."

Sgt. Olatunde Olatunji
PST crew-served gunner, HHC, Avn. Bde.

Soldiers. They were asked if they wanted to be on the team because we wanted to make sure they wanted to be here. We are like a brotherhood in which everyone watches out

and helps each other."

Olatunji feels the PST Soldiers have what it takes to handle the responsibility of their jobs because of their attentiveness.

"Our primary concern is focus," Olatunji said. "Everyone needs to stay focused. We are not letting down our guard until the mission is complete: when the VIP returns home safely."

When it comes to personnel security, Blanco said his Soldiers need to have a combination of three characteristics: attention to detail, discipline and motivation.

"You need to be able to follow specific directions, do what is being told of you and perform well under both physical and mental stress," he said.

Despite the stress the job might bring, Olatunji said he wouldn't trade his position.

Since his usual job is in a personnel office, he said being part of the PST gives him a pleasant change.

"This is an experience of a lifetime," he said. "Someone's life is on the line, it makes me realize, 'Wow, this is the real thing.' This is a great and different experience."



Sgt. Olatunde Olatunji, HHC, Avn. Bde., mans the crew-served weapon on a humvee during the arrival of an Army general officer at the Camp Taji airfield.

TF Baghdad elements team up as Division Reserve

Spc. Brian P. Henretta
Avn. Bde. PAO

Pilots from 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Assault Helicopter) have been working closely with the 3rd Infantry Division Reserve, a quick reaction force, since arriving here to provide air transportation and support for the QRF.

The Division Reserve is a team comprised of tankers from Headquarters and 3rd Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor and infantrymen from 2nd Platoon, G Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry

Regiment, and teamed with 4/3 AHB for OIF 3.

Their mission is to be on constant standby and ready to move quickly to any area in 3rd Inf. Div.'s area of operations by Blackhawk, humvees, M-1 tanks, or Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

They are called upon to provide additional security for troops who need it, being used as backup fighting power.

They also secure facilities, areas and political rallies, go on patrols, recover downed aircraft, or relieve other units who may be doing any of these things.

The Soldiers who make up the QRF didn't know they would be doing this mission for their deployment until after they arrived at Camp Taji.

Many of the Soldiers are former tankers, so they had to train for days to prepare themselves for their new task, said 1st Sgt. Michael P. Summers, Team Cougar first sergeant.

Although the team will train continuously this year, they are now ready for any mission by combining their experience in wheeled vehicles and armor with the new air assault skills they have learned since arriving.

They have spent hours properly entering and exiting stationary and moving Blackhawks, and have conducted close quarter marksmanship and reflexive fire training scenarios, Summers said.

The situation determines how they move to where they're needed. If the Division Reserve needs to be somewhere as fast as possible, they fly in Blackhawks. Sometimes they need heavy fire-power and in those cases they would take tanks and Bradleys, said Summers.

4/3 Aviation Battalion has been very helpful in training and support to the Division Reserve. They have had lots of flight time and aircraft dedicated to their mission, Summers added.

An example of this is a recent training mission at an assault-range in the Iraqi countryside to give the units better experience working with each other.

During separate day and night missions, pilots from 4/3 AHB flew into the landing zone where the Division Reserve dismounted and began conducting a patrol to a live-fire range.



Photos by Spc. Brian P. Henretta

An assault team with C Co., 1/13 Armor prepares for a tactical movement across the desert after being air-inserted by a 4/3 AHB Blackhawk at an air-insertion and tactical-movement live-fire range.

The range simulated an urban combat setting, said 1st Lt. Jeffrey Rini, a field safety officer with C Co., 1/13 Cavalry.

After engaging targets, the Division Reserve QRF moved to a pickup zone where they mounted Blackhawks and moved out of the area.

The partnership that has developed between 4/3 AHB and the Division Reserve has been a great success so far and the two will continue supporting each other throughout their deployment.



Soldiers from the Division's Ready Reserve, working with 4/3 AHB, evacuate a simulated casualty over difficult terrain at an assault range.

First class of Iraqi Soldiers graduate from logistics school

Sgt. Kevin Bromley
3/1 AD PAO

TAJI, Iraq – More than one hundred Iraqi Soldiers officially became logistics specialists upon their graduation from the Iraqi Army Support Services Institute in Taji April 18.

The graduates stood on the hot pavement of the parade ground, proudly displaying Iraqi flags in their formation.

The Soldiers learned the precise skills necessary to re-supply and sustain their respective line units.

"Go forward to support your units,

I encourage you to continue to learn," said one Iraqi officer addressing the graduating class.

The skills taught at SSI are vital to the Iraqi Army's expanding role as the security force for Iraq.

Previously, Iraqi Army units have relied on Multi-National Forces'

logistical support when conducting day to day operations.

The logistics school is a joint operation between Iraqi and Australian Forces. The Iraqi Army is moving toward complete and autonomous security operations with their own logistical support capabilities.



Sgt. Kevin Bromley

Iraqi Army Soldiers line the parade field as they graduate from the Iraqi Army Support Services Institute. This is the first class to graduate from SSI and the skills they learned will help shift the Iraqi Army to completely autonomous security operations.

Mortar mission bde.'s first since WWII

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – For the first time in six decades, the mortar platoon of 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, conducted an area-denial mission in combat on March 9.

It was the first such mission for the brigade since World War II.

Lt. Col. Conrad Gavel from Mandeville, La., the commander of 2/156th, said he is proud of his Soldiers' performance.

"This mortar platoon has been a combat multiplier since the early days of our mobilization. They all scored 'expert' on their mortar gunner's exams, and have performed consistently ever since," he said.

Gavel claimed the lack of opportunity to use indirect fires has not affected the mortar platoon's abilities to execute a successful mission. Though it has been months since they conducted a live fire, their first round was within 50 meters of the target and the adjustments were perfect. He said since arriving in Iraq, the mortar platoon was tasked with other duties and has performed the various jobs well.

"Their flexibility and professionalism has been outstanding, and I'm proud to have them represent this task force," Gavel said.

Staff Sgt. Randy Roaix, from Carencro, La., the mortar platoon sergeant for Headquarters Company, 2/156th, said he's glad his Soldiers could make a significant

contribution to securing the safety of their comrades.

"Area denial is all about taking out the point of origin, where the enemy fires a lot of indirect fire or rockets," Roaix said. "We wanted the insurgents to know that we can reach them anytime, anywhere, and it seems like it had the effect that we were looking for."

Roaix said the terrorists got the message, adding that the local citizens talked about it for a long time after the fact, and they now know that U.S. Forces can get to them if needed.

Roaix explained that even though the platoon was split up for various duties when they arrived in Baghdad six months ago, the mortar infantrymen did not forget where they came from. He said some of his guys were placed on a personal security detachment, while others were sent to a light infantry platoon. When they came together for the historical mission, however, they never missed a beat.

"I think it says a lot about the platoon that they haven't worked together for months, but still performed successfully," Roaix said.

Sgt. Ryan McCool, from Prairieville, La., is the fire direction control for the 2/156th mortar platoon. Roaix has endorsed him as the most experienced in the brigade.

Prior to deployment, all FDCs were required to be certified on an advanced computer system necessary for conducting mortar missions. Three FDCs from 2/156th were certified on the first try.

They were the only three in



Spc. Erin Robicheaux

Spc. Camille Fossier, from Lafayette La, "hangs a round" March 9 for the first 256th BCT combat mortar mission since WWII. Fossier scored as an "expert" on mortar gun qualifications in 2004.

the entire 256th to do so.

In addition, McCool was the best performer in the brigade.

The process of a mortar mission begins in the field with the forward observers. They find a target and call in to the FDC with a location. McCool's job is to compute the data, plot the coordinates and communicate the mission down to the gun. He said they performed two missions March 9: area denial (or high explosive) which was the primary focus, and an illumination mission.

Illuminations are conducted at night and provide light for the forward observers, who hopefully, can catch someone in the act of emplacing an improvised explosive device.

McCool said both missions were successful.

"With the high explosive mission, we were right on target, and we hit everything we

shot at," he said. "The illumination mission was successful in that we accurately engaged our targets, but the forward observers didn't see anyone out there."

When McCool called the directions down to the guns, there was a rush of combat boots as the crew with the weapon prepared the coordinates for fire.

Sgt. Chad Welch, from Pineville, La., was the squad leader who received the directions. He said once the call came in, one would never know this was their first mission since arriving in Baghdad.

"When the FDC gave instructions, the gunner, assistant gunner, and ammunition bearer went to work to set the fuse and prepare the gun for fire," he said.

When McCool shouted those magic words, "Fire for

effect!" the round was dropped and the mortar infantrymen of 2/156th made history for the brigade.

Welch said that at times, firing mortars can be a little stressful.

"The squad leader's job is to observe for safety and accuracy, and at the same time, receive commands from the FDC and give them down to the gunner," said Welch. "You really have to pay attention to everything going on around you."

Roaix said, as a leader, he was very anxious when the fire directions were given.

After the first round went off, however, the crew was right on top of it, giving Roaix a chance to finally relax.

"That was the longest 34-and-a-half seconds of my life," he said.

6/8 Cav. trains Iraq's 'Defenders of the Green Zone'

2nd Lt. Seth Kirchhoff
6/8 Cav. PAO

BAGHDAD – Members of 6th Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th

Brigade Combat Team, took the first steps toward the success of their new mission in Iraq April 18 – training the "Defenders of the Green Zone."

The unit's mission is to train the

Iraqi Army's 1st and 3rd battalions, along with Headquarters Company of the 5th Brigade, 6th Division.

U.S. Soldiers will provide instruction to Iraqi leaders referencing the

skills and leadership attributes required to train competent and successful Soldiers.

When all is said and done, 5th Bde., 6th Div. will be capable of protecting the International Zone and its surrounding areas without assistance from the U.S. military.

During the first day of training at Muthana Airfield, located just north of the International Zone, Lt. Col. Michael Harris, 6th Bn., 8th Cav. Reg. commander, led the way as his cavalymen were introduced to the Iraqi Soldiers they will work with for the next eight weeks.

Although the link-up seemed awkward at first due to the language barrier, both sides appeared eager to train and were ready to learn from one another.

Most of the tasks the 1,000-plus Iraqi Soldiers will learn consist of basic Soldier skills such as rifle marksmanship, battle drills, manning traffic control points and first aid, said Maj. Chris Worrill, 6/8 Cav.'s operations officer.

"Our goal here is not to turn the Iraqi Army into an American Army, but rather show the Iraqi leaders how we conduct business and let them make decisions on what tactics, techniques and procedures will work best for them," Worrill said.



Courtesy photo

Members of the IA's 1st and 3rd battalions and Headquarters Company, 5th Brigade, 6th Division stand in formation April 18.

3rd Inf. Div. develops relationship with Baghdad U

Information Operations Cell Staff
Special to The Marne Express

BAGHDAD – Baghdad University has received school supplies and equipment from the 3rd Infantry Division as part of the division's new relationship with university officials.

Soldiers made two trips to the uni-

versity to deliver tables, chairs, computer equipment, and division's Information Operations cell donated 3,000 library and reference books and magazines along other various supplies for student use March 22.

The division made the deliveries as a sign of good will toward the future politics, economics and university leaders of Iraq.

The 3rd Inf. Div. realizes that the future of Iraq is in the hands of its universities, and that the supplies provided will help students reach their educational goals.

The Marne Division is looking forward to strengthening its relationship with Baghdad University and it stands ready to assist the school's growth in the community.

Having a ball in Baghdad ...



Platoon leader 2nd Lt. Robert Schlauf, 550th Area Support Medical Company, plays a short game of "keep away" with children in Taji. Schlauf participated in a Civil Affairs mission to Taji area communities to provide basic health care assessments. Soldiers also distributed donated toys to the children during their medical mission.

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Chadwick

One million gallons, still pumping

Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The forward arming refueling point provides the lifeblood that keeps Aviation Brigade's helicopters in the air.

The Soldiers of 3-5 Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion hit a milestone April 6 by pumping their millionth gallon of fuel since taking over refueling operations, quicker than anyone expected.

While the Soldiers saw it as just another part of the day's work, leadership was extremely proud, of the professional job performed so far by all, and how quickly they reached this milestone.

"We have been working at a very high pace, but people didn't think we would have pumped this much so quickly," said 2nd Lt. Esperanza George, 3-5 platoon leader. "My troops are something special. I thank my noncommissioned officers for that. Without them I don't think we could achieve what we did. They are very motivating and make sure the job gets done safely."

There haven't been any accidents at the FARP since the 603rd ASB took over duties.

This can be attributed to daily safety briefings and equipment checks, according to Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Martinez, 3-5 platoon sergeant.

When a helicopter lands in the FARP, a refuel-

ing team springs to action and like clockwork, each Soldier knows his role, to allow for a quick turn-around of aircraft.

They supply fuel for all coalition helicopters in the Baghdad area, including Navy, Marine and British aircraft.

This is a critical mission to the coalition and aviation brigade because if they can't refuel, it grounds everything, Martinez said.

George's hard working Soldiers are proud of all they have done in a very short amount of time.

"We have a great sense of accomplishment. This is just us doing our job, but we've worked our tails off and done it exceptionally well," said Arthur Butt, a petroleum supply specialist with HSC, 603rd ASB.

"The past few months have been a total team effort on our part. We have the fuelers, truck drivers, armament specialists out there keeping extremely busy to pump that much fuel so quickly," said Patrick Wiley, an aviation refueler with HSC, 603rd.

With one million gallons pumped in such a short amount of time, how much fuel can this unit expect to pump throughout OIF 3?

"Last time I was here we pumped 3.8 million in 11 months," said Martinez. "If we keep up the pace we're at now, we could hit five million this time."



Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Pvt. Junius Richard, a refueler with HSC, 603rd ASB, screws on the fuel cap to a Blackhawk after the FARP pumped one million gallons of fuel.

2/14 Inf. medic takes control in emergency, saves lives

Spc. Matthew McLaughlin

12/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Now is the time, he thought to himself as he gazed in shock at his wounded comrades. This was the reason for all of his training as a medic; the reason he joined the Army; possibly the reason for his very existence.

Without hesitation, he grabbed his equipment and raced across a field towards his destiny.

Pfc. Jacob Torres, a medic with 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, tested his training and his mettle when he treated nine Soldiers and Marines after an insurgent attack Sept. 28.

Soldiers from 2/14 Inf. found an improvised explosive device while on patrol along Route Tampa in Baghdad.

They secured the area and waited for the explosive ordnance detachment team to arrive.

While waiting for EOD, a Marine convoy heading towards Falluja

approached. There was no way around the road and the Marines were in a rush, so they decided to pass, against the Soldiers' advice.

The convoy passed between the IED and a 2/14 Inf. humvee. Suddenly the IED detonated, hitting a Marine truck containing several Marines.

"The whole passenger side of the seven-ton (truck) collapsed," said Torres, a Bakersville, Calif., native. "I was about 100 meters away in a field. I saw everyone was down and I took my (medic) bag and went running."

Torres said the reality of the situation did not hit him immediately.

"At first I was nervous," he said. "I realized all these people were hurt. It took a moment to register that I was the one who had to help them. No one else could do it. Once I started with the first patient I knew what to do."

Sgt. Shawn Coyle, a fire direction center Soldier from Quincy, Ill., said Torres took complete control of the situation. He immediately tended to the

most seriously wounded patient, a Marine hit in the armpit with shrapnel.

All eyes turned to Torres for help. He was not without help, however. Fellow Soldiers and Marines assisted Torres as he went from patient to patient.

"I had a lot of help from everyone there," Torres said. "Two female Marines were injured but were still trying to help."

Although Torres was one of the junior-ranking Soldiers present, everyone followed his lead and obeyed his orders, Coyle said.

"Rank goes out the window, and they have to understand that," he added. "(Torres) took control of the whole situation. It was amazing how well he did under pressure."

Torres stabilized the Marine, but he died later during surgery. The medic had more patients to tend to, however, and he couldn't reflect on consequences — or names and ranks for that matter.

"Everything happened so fast, I don't remember faces," Torres said. "It was just a blur. People said 'you did this, you did that.' I don't remember."

He couldn't remember faces or even what he did, but weeks later Torres could still explain in detail every injury he treated.

In all, Torres treated nine Soldiers and Marines.

All this from a private first class only months into his first deployment, Coyle said.

"He never did anything like this in a real world situation," he said. "I brag to other Soldiers about him. I said, 'You should have seen him.' We want to have him out with us every time."

For his bravery, Torres was awarded the Combat Medic Badge.

He said he is proud of his performance and glad he could help his comrades in arms.

"It feels good, like I did something," Torres said. "I didn't feel like I was doing my job until then."

IA bomb company's efforts save lives

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT PAO

The 30th Iraqi Army Brigade's bomb company is working hard to make the streets safer for the citizens of Iraq.

What started from a small group of Iraqi Soldiers grew into a company of six officers and 86



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Salahaddin governor Hamed Hamoud Al Shakti cuts a ribbon at a ceremony for the opening of the 30th IA Bomb Company's new headquarters in Tikrit April 10.

Soldiers, said Brig. Gen. Abdul-Jabbar Saleh Rabiye, 30th IA Bde. commander.

Rabiye said the newly formed bomb company has already proven itself worthy.

"In spite of the small size of the company, they led a big operation during the election," Rabiye said. "The election was successful with the company protecting the polling center."

The election was one of the company's many successes since its activation Jan. 1, said Maj. Qais Abdul Qadir, the bomb company commander.

"Our company has finished so many duties in spite of the short time since its establishment," said Abdul Qadir. "This company has achieved six perfect training stages in cooperation with friendly forces. Over 100 bombs and (improvised explosive devices) have been cleared and more than a thousand meters of road has been protected and fenced."

Coalition Forces leaders who work with the IA have noticed the progress and see growth in the IA's future. They are confident in the IA's abilities to run the show.

"These guys are doing a great job," said Maj. Kelly Donna, 1st Brigade Combat Team military transition team officer-in-charge.

"We see progress everyday and they are great

guys to work with. I would feel comfortable staying out here with these guys," Donna said.

Iraqi army leaders anticipate much growth in the future too, Abdul Qadir said.

The recent dedication of their new headquarters building in Tikrit April 10 was an indication of the bomb company's growth.

With the increasing size of the company, it desperately needed a headquarters from which it could more efficiently run its operation, said Abdul Qadir.

"This center will enable the personnel of our company to do their duties under the supervision of the engineering units of the Coalition Forces," he said. We are preparing more headquarters in Tikrit, Baiji, Samarra, Balad, Ad Dawr and Ad Dhuliyah."

Abdul Qadir said he feels his company must be doing well because it's beginning to draw attention from anti-Iraqi forces.

"Our company is a big target for the terrorists," Abdul Qadir said. "We know this because so many officers and Soldiers have been wounded and many vehicles destroyed."

Rabiye said he hopes for continued support from Coalition Forces to enable the further growth of his own forces. He said a stronger force is the only way he can guarantee the continued safety and stability of the Iraqi people in his area of operation.

3/3 Avn. commo shop keeps battalion connected

Spc. Brian P. Henretta
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Information is a key to winning the War on Terrorism, but without the proper communication channels to share that information, it becomes useless.

That's why a battalion communications shop is critical for operations in Iraq and why the S-6 cell with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Helicopter) is so helpful to the interactions of the battalion.

The Soldiers who work in the S-6 have been working at a hectic pace since arriving to Camp Taji, partly because they didn't have the luxury of falling in on an adequate supply of pre-existing equipment, or even buildings to house their equipment.

In both their headquarters building and tactical operations center, the Soldiers had to install everything themselves to get the various systems operating.

"We had to completely start from scratch," said Sgt. Jeffery L. Wood, a communications team chief with HHC, 3/3 AHB. "Our headquarters building has been under renovations and didn't have any internet wiring, so we have to run cables and knock holes in

the sheetrock walls to install it."

The members of the S-6 team are also installing Armed Forces Network-ready cable outlets in each of the rooms in their headquarters building, as well as building an education center.

The education center is for Soldiers to visit during their off time to take on-line Army correspondence courses, said Wood.

While 3/3 AHB's headquarters has required wiring overhauls, its TOC needed an extensive facelift to become operational.

"We had to take out entire walls," said Spc. Rambo Rapu, a communications specialist with HHC. "The room was too small to hold everyone required to perform tactical operations and aircraft control, so we made it bigger and installed all the computer, telephone and radio equipment."

After spending the first few months of the deployment running wires and setting up equipment, Soldiers from the S-6 are far from done with their important mission.

The current phase of operations — maintaining and protecting the equipment — may be even more important, Rapu said.

"Now we work on stopping new viruses from entering the network and troubleshooting

computer problems," he added. "Virus protection is so important because we can't have anything hidden on any government computers to slow them down or compromise the mission."

The communication equipment is used by pilots and controllers.

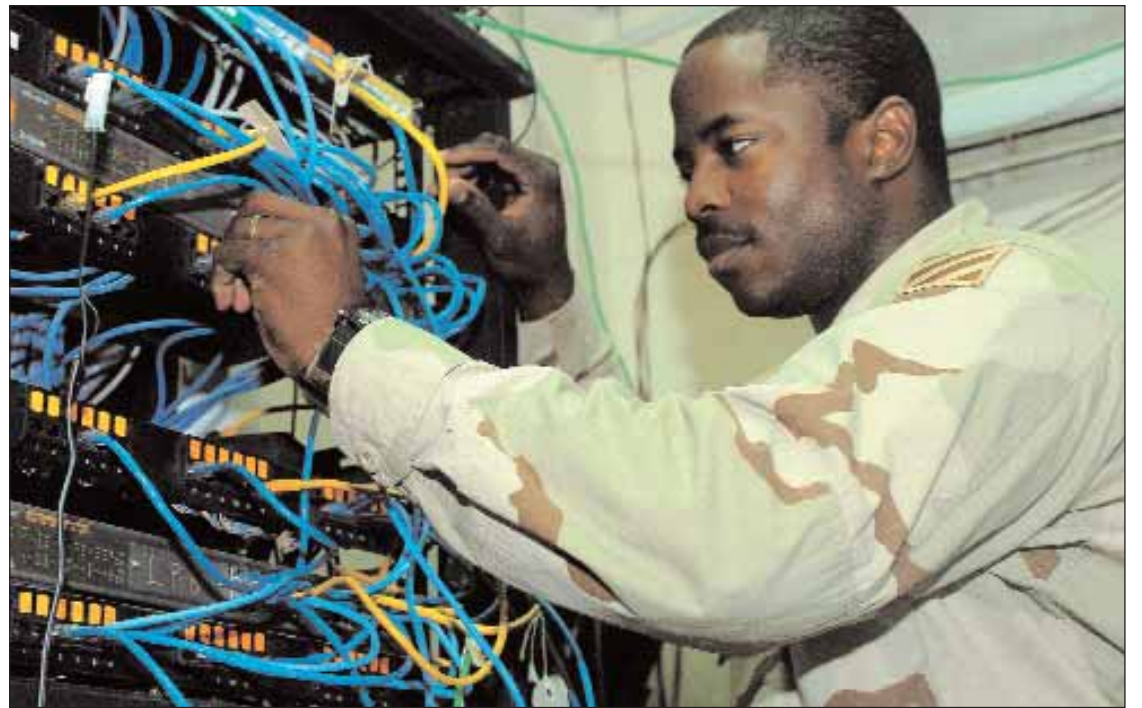
Flight operations informa-

tion is then relayed to the TOC, as well as received and transmitted by unmanned aerial vehicles.

The various tasks performed by the communications specialists are crucial to the battalion's mission and their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

"(The Soldiers) have been working hard from Kuwait

until now," said Capt. Carlos E. Davis, 3/3 AHB signal officer. "They put all of this equipment together themselves and have accepted great responsibility and long work hours to get our communications working. Without their work and the continuing efforts of the guys working in the TOC, all communication is in the dark."



Spc. Brian P. Henretta

Spc. Rambo Rapu, a communications specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3/3 Attack Helicopter Battalion, installs internet cable in the server room.

Task Force Liberty News Briefs

Cordon and search yields cache

JISR NAFT, Iraq — The Iraqi Army's 6th Battalion, 3rd Brigade found a cache in a small village northwest of Jisr Naft in Diyala Province April 27.

After receiving small-arms fire, the IA lead element cordoned off the area for a search. The search yielded a book on bomb making, improvised explosive device-making materials and two weapons.

Mayor, Coalition join for school supply mission

BALAD RUZ, Iraq — The mayor of Balad Ruz delivered school supplies to students in two schools within Balad Ruz in Diyala Province April 27.

He was escorted by Iraqi Police and Soldiers from Task Force Liberty's 278th Regimental Combat Team. The supplies were donated and mailed by Soldiers' family members in the United States.

IPs, TF Liberty Soldiers visit village

IMAN WELLS, Iraq — Iraqi Police and Soldiers from Task Force Liberty's 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery, con-

ducted a visit to homes in Iman Wells, south of Buhriz in Diyala Province, April 28.

This was the first time that IPs and TF 1-10 visited Iman Wells in a large number. The police and TF 1-10 Soldiers handed out numerous soccer balls and beanie babies.

TF Liberty conducts village engagement, project assessment

ALY MAT, Iraq — Task Force Liberty Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor, inspected and assessed the gravel laid down on a road in Aly Mat in Diyala Province April 24.

The road allows for safer conditions and more traffic on the road that leads to an elementary school.

Man detained in Citadel Market Place

KIRKUK, Iraq — Azadi police detained one individual accused of illegally selling weapons and ammunition in the Citadel Market Place April 27.

The detention occurred during a joint patrol by Azadi police and Task Force Liberty Soldiers. The suspect was transported to the Azadi police station

for further questioning.

Medical mission comes to Abu Kurjay and Shahal

ABU KURJAY AND SHAHAL, Iraq — Various healthcare providers came together for two days to make a difference in the lives of villagers in Abu Kurjah and Shahal in Kirkuk Province April 11 and 12.

Local healthcare providers and Task Force Liberty medical personnel identified chronic problems, administered immunizations and offered health education.

Taza City mayor hosts footbridge opening

TAZA, Iraq — The Taza mayor and city council members officially opened a new footbridge allowing pedestrians to walk easily to the market area in Kirkuk Province April 23.

The bridge is expected to create economic benefits for the community. The construction of the bridge is the result of contracts awarded by Coalition Forces.

IPs conduct first independent IED sweep

HAWIJAH, Iraq — The Iraqi Police

explosive ordnance detachment in Hawijah conducted independent operations after receiving a tip on an improvised explosive device in Kirkuk Province April 23.

This is the first known independent response to a tip received internally in the Iraqi Security Forces in Hawijah.

Kidnappers arrested in Al Wasity

AL WASITY, Iraq — An Iraqi Emergency Response Unit team with Coalition Forces support detained three individuals suspected to be involved in kidnapping and ransom activities in Al Wasity in Kirkuk Province April 26. A previous kidnap victim identified one of the detained suspects as her captor.

IA Soldiers train on squad and team tasks

BALAD, Iraq — Soldiers from the Iraqi army's 210th Battalion trained on their proficiency in team and squad tasks during training April 16 on a Coalition Forces base near Balad. Task Force Liberty Soldiers trained their Iraqi army counterparts on how to maneuver on an enemy position and react to sniper fire.



Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad commander, administers the oath of enlistment to Staff Sgt. Robert Valley, Jr., Staff Sgt. Carlos Parker and Spc. Nicholas Powell, all from 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, in a ceremony at Camp Loyalty, Iraq, April 16.

Spc. Ben Brody

Minnesota leadership visits National Guard Soldiers



Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Maj. Gen. Lawrence Shellito, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, visited Baghdad April 22 to discuss the mission of B Company, 134th Signal Battalion, 34th Infantry Division, attached to 256th Brigade Combat Team.

The day began with breakfast with Soldiers of B Co., 134th, followed by a tour of the unit's facilities.

Capt. Shelley Hermes, B Co. commander, said she wanted Shellito to see the good work her Soldiers have done since arriving in Baghdad.

"My purpose was to have him go to the heart of each platoon, so we took him to certain spots and allowed our Soldiers to brief him on their missions and successes," Hermes said.

Shellito's reaction to the Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System, was a grin from ear to ear. The JLENS is an air surveillance system which allows the operator to see action in the field.

Sgt. Holly Timmer, a JLENS operator with B Co., explained the training the unit received while they prepared to deploy.

"He was impressed with our capabilities and said that we were a good asset that needed to be utilized to our entire potential," Timmer said. "We're the first company in the 34th ID to work with the JLENS system."

Overall, B Co. is the third group to ever go through the training, and for a while, were

the only group in theater trained on the system.

Shellito also toured the company's node center, which channels all secured and unsecured voice communication.

Staff Sgt. Marty Byrne, a node center switch supervisor, said his platoon is very efficient and plays a vital role in the mission of the Army.

"We link between 10,000 and 14,000 phone calls daily, and our phones are up over 99 percent of the time, 24 hours a day and seven days a week," Byrne said.

At the motor pool, Shellito questioned Staff Sgt. Keven Vonrump, a B Co. mechanic, about the add-on armor for the humvees. Vonrump described the pros and cons, and along with other Soldiers, gave the general a better understanding of their functions.

Hermes said she believes the visit was a successful one, and said she felt Shellito was both satisfied and impressed with the progress.

"He thought we had very intelligent Soldiers who were on top of the situation and experienced at doing their jobs and performing well," said Hermes. "He was very happy that we've been as successful and done as much for the brigade as we can. I think he'll take this back to the States."

Shellito described B Co. as a unit that has the ability to get things done, and he particularly emphasized to the unit the need to reflect on their surroundings sometimes.

"As we drove up here, we saw all the events that we've seen on the news for the past two years," he said. "You are living in the middle of history."



Photos by Sgt. Thomas Benoit

Top: Maj. Gen. Lawrence Shellito, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, had breakfast and conversation with Soldiers from B Co., 134th Sig. Bn. Shellito traveled to Iraq to witness first-hand how his Soldiers are assisting in the war on terrorism.

Above: Shellito surrounds himself with capable mechanics from B Co., 134th.

Right: Shellito shakes hands and thanks Soldiers.



Soldiers patrol new environment

From crowded cities to open desert, insurgents' safe houses are being sought out

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT PAO

SAMARRA, Iraq – Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, along with 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment and 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry began their missions supporting Operation Forsyth Park outside the city of Samarra starting April 17.

"We're actually looking for foreign fighters," said Maj. Pat Walsh, 3/69 Armor operations officer.

The Soldiers are also trying to determine the sphere of influence any foreign fighters may have had over the people who live in these rural areas, Walsh said.

This operation is meant to gather information more than it is meant to make arrests or engage any enemy.

"Our success isn't deter-

mined by the amount of individuals we have detained," Walsh said. "We have been able to get a positive influence not only for Coalition Forces, but for the Iraqi Security Forces as well."

With the help of the ISF, much more progress is being made than during Operation Iraqi Freedom 1 and 2.

"This is really the first contact these people have had with Soldiers since the first OIF," Walsh said. "Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces are driving together. They are speaking their language and asking questions about not only foreign fighters, but how they can help or how we can help them."

This type of mission is a big change from what the Soldiers are used to doing.

"These guys have been in the city fighting insurgents,



Photos by Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Above: Soldiers from 3/69 Armor roll down the street while on patrol in the city of Samarra April 21.
Below: 3/69 Soldiers pull security during a short stop while supporting Operation Forsyth Park.

now they are out in the desert," Walsh said.

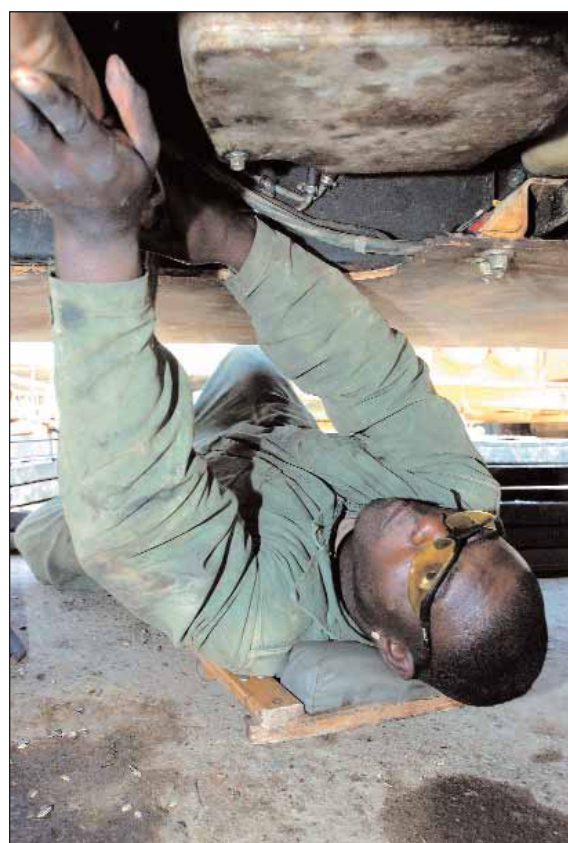
"Our guys are used to doing patrols in Samarra, which is a pretty big city," said Capt. Ryan Wylie, B Company, 3/69 Armor commander. "(They) are really getting a good feel for the diversity around the city. They

get experience from operating in the urban areas, and from this recent operation we have been working primarily in a rural area."

Walsh said the change in mission not only benefits the Soldiers with a new kind of environment, but deters the ter-

rorists from operating in an area they once thought was safe for them.

"We wanted to switch up and do something completely different," Walsh said. "We wanted to let any terrorists know we will deny the enemy sanctuary."



Spc. Ben Brody

Spc. Dejuan Bryant, an HHC, 2 BCT light-wheeled vehicle mechanic, works on a humvee's exhaust system at Camp Loyalty April 7.

Roughrider mechanics 'keep y'all rolling'

Spc. Ben Brody
2nd BCT PAO

CAMP LOYALTY, Iraq – The sound of cranking ratchets, rumbling engines and shrieking timing belts can almost always be heard in one spot on Camp Loyalty.

At the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team motor pool, 11 mechanics work long, strenuous hours maintaining the brigade's vehicles.

"We're working hard to keep the unit mobile and sustain our combat power," said Staff Sgt. Keith Kerrick, HHC, 2nd BCT shop foreman. "We keep y'all rolling."

Kerrick, from Washington, D.C., said he often works hand in hand with other Loyalty motor pools to secure needed parts, rather than waiting weeks for orders to be filled.

The motor pool also handles all of the brigade's attached units and their vehicles – units like Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, personal security details and Air Force detachments. All in all, they are currently responsible for about 70 vehicles, and every week, they get more.

Everything from humvees, light

medium tactical vehicles, M577 armored personnel carriers, M88 recovery vehicles, M2 Bradleys and generators can be found in various states of disassembly during the day in the motor pool.

"It's a good team, a good set of people, squared away (noncommissioned officers)," said Pvt. Uriah John, HHC, 2nd BCT, generator mechanic. "I'd stay 20 years right here with this team if I could."

John, from St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, said he thinks Fort Stewart and the 3rd Infantry Division is a good place for a Soldier to start a career.

"It's tough here, you get put to the test mentally and physically," he said. "But the pressure makes you perform at a higher level."

During a typical day, mechanics upgrade vehicles with armor and other equipment, while performing organizational-level preventative maintenance checks and services, according to Spc. Luis Crespo, HHC, 2nd BCT motor pool supply specialist.

Crespo, from San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico, has responsibilities that include ordering parts for vehicles and issuing them to mechanics.

A normal day at the motor pool runs until dusk, and judging by the sweat pouring off of the mechanics, the days are demanding.

The group usually tackles four vehicles per day that are scheduled for routine maintenance, then deals with whatever repair issues pop up.

Sometimes the crew performs major repairs on up to ten vehicles a day.

"We have a lot of attachments that we're responsible for, but the team really comes together and we have a little fun," said Staff Sgt. Harry Anderson, HHC, 2nd BCT, motor pool noncommissioned-officer-in-charge. "We try to make it a home away from home here and keep a good atmosphere."

Anderson, from Sumter, S.C., said he believes the key to his team's unity is good communication – and a good sense of humor. He said his mechanics know when it's okay to kid around and when it's time to be serious.

"We have Soldiers risking their lives every day, using vehicles all the time," John said. "It's important no one breaks down out there in the combat zone, or gets hurt because of faulty safety equipment."

Soldiers fund projects, compensate for damages

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT PAO

SAMARRA, Iraq – Iraq is a combat zone. In a combat zone, accidental damage to private property and civilian injuries are inevitable. When Coalition Forces are at fault, they are willing to pay restitution to the victims of these accidents as long as they have proof of the incident.

Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment Iraqi Security Forces liaison and civil affairs office ventured to downtown Samarra to review claims by Iraqis and distribute funds.

“When people have damage to property, or someone in their family is killed as a result of our operations, they present evidence to us,” said 1st Lt. Doug Maritato, 3/69 Armor ISF liaison officer in charge. “This evidence can be documents, photographs, medical records or death certificates.”

Since most of the evidence presented by the Iraqi nationals is written in Arabic, an interpreter is needed to translate the evidence and the dialogue spoken between the Coalition Forces and the Iraqis.

“We have an interpreter to help us look over all the peoples’ evidence,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Smith, the ISF liaison noncommissioned officer in charge. “With his help, we determine whether or not the evidence is legitimate. If it is, we sign off on it and give them a certain amount of funds.”

The funds for the Iraqis come from two different sources, Smith said. One is the Iraqi relief

fund, which is used to build projects that aid the Iraqi economy. The other is the commander’s emergency response program bulk fund. These funds are used as restitution for damaged property and bodily harm.

“Civil affairs works with the municipalities to negotiate payment for temporary extra employees,” Smith said. “This is a short term solution. Once the interim government gets control of the economy, they will do their own hiring from their funds.”

The IRRF funds are distributed by a higher command, said Capt. Rod McCauley, 411th Civil Affairs Battalion. “The Iraqis propose new projects, and we decide which ones will get funded. We send the request higher up the chain of command.”

McCauley drives to the sites of different projects to inspect the progress being made and how the funds are being invested.

“We don’t have a problem paying for things, but I want to be sure we are getting value for our money,” McCauley said.

Not all the Iraqis get the funds they ask for, Smith said. Sometimes the evidence provided isn’t enough to justify restitution. Aside from that, Coalition Forces don’t offer any restitution for damage caused by anti-Iraqi Forces.

The main point is to show the Iraqis that the Coalition Forces are responsible for their actions.

“Anytime we mess something up, we fix it, if all the evidence proves it was our fault,” Maritato said. “It’s a good solution to these people’s problems.”



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
ISF liaison officers 1st Lt. Doug Maritato and Staff Sgt. Jason Smith, 3/69 Armor, review claims made by two Iraqis before paying them restitution on alleged damaged property in Samarra April 25.

PATROL, continued from page 1

times it’s been used as a dumping ground. We get out there and make sure there haven’t been any caches placed or anybody trying to cross the river. It’s one of the main infiltration routes we worry about when coming outside the Green Zone.”

Upon arriving at the dumping ground, some of the 1/1 Soldiers secured the perimeter while others searched for items such as weapons, unexploded ordnance and an abandoned bunker. With some coaching from 4/64 Soldiers, the IA troops were able to

complete the mission without a hitch.

The next several stops along the way were what Hill, a Newell, N.C., native, called “meet and greet” areas — the residential sections of the city where Soldiers take some time to feel the pulse of the community.

“We get out and walk around, talk to the local populace, go to the local store, maybe buy a soda,” Hill said. “We hang out and talk to them, see if they’ve had any problems, stuff like that.”

As the three-vehicle convoy moved from place to place, 1/1 Soldiers moved confidently and efficiently, quick to carry out instructions given to them by their 4/64 comrades. Since most of the Iraqi Soldiers speak little English, an interpreter goes along on each mission to communicate between the two units.

Even without an interpreter, though, the smiles on the IA Soldiers’ faces speak volumes about their pride in their new jobs and their desire to continue to get better at what they do.

“They’re very proud people,” said 2nd Lt. Bill Evans, a B Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, California National Guard platoon leader whose unit also works with 1/1. “They want to learn. We seem to do a lot for them these days, but we have to wean them from that, we have to sever those ties so they can do this on their own.”

Sgt. Marcus Brister, a D Co., 4/64 squad leader, said he thinks the Iraqis’ biggest

improvements come from their daily involvement in the security missions.

“At first, it was like herding cats,” he said of his unit’s initial work with the IA Soldiers. “You could tell them what to do and where they need to go, but they’re going to take their own way to get there.”

Evans said the IA Soldiers’ zeal has caused the biggest challenges in the way they conduct operations.

“If we get (intelligence) on someone we’re looking for, we go through a whole (operation order) before we take any action,” he said. “But if we send them out just to get information on the person, they’ll come back, all excited, with him tied up, and say, ‘We got him!’ We’re trying to teach them that that’s not the way we do things.”

“They want to do their jobs,” Evans, from Torrance, Calif., added, “but they just don’t have the guidance. You can’t easily undo what Saddam did over 35 years.”

Still, little by little, the U.S. Soldiers’ joined efforts are proving to be essential in reaching the ultimate goal of turning Iraq’s security over to its own Soldiers, and the need for Serrano, Mata and Foutch’s Bradley is growing smaller and smaller.



Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncraft
Soldiers from 1/1 IA and 4/64th Armor dismount and head out on a routine patrol in Baghdad April 8.

GUNS, continued from page 1

with chief coverage of a grid area. Basically we have an observer out there with sight of six or eight kilometers,” Lowry said. “When the round bursts he uses it to identify targets. We also use the round as a distraction for the enemy. The enemy will look up and watch the round. It also gives us an idea of who is doing wrong. You can’t really hear the round until it is right over you, and by then it is too late for them to disguise what they are doing.”

The artillery Soldiers got the intelligence for their area of fire from a group of special scouts who observe the area well before the fire mission.

“We were firing on predetermined targets,” Lowry said. “Our fire support element got information from the (long range surveillance detachment) that there was high insurgent activity in the area.”

After the illumination rounds, 1/41 tested 15 rocket assisted projectiles.

A RAP goes beyond what a regular round could reach due to the rocket propulsion.

“It will go two or three kilometers further, depending on the size of the charge, which increases our range,” Lowry said. “Not only does this keep our Soldiers safer, but it saves time on having to move forward to engage targets that under normal circumstances would be out of our range.”

Since the artillery rounds are so expensive, the platoon leader has to account for all the rounds before packing up, Dorffeld said. “We have to send a message in to higher-up before we can leave. They want to make sure everything went smoothly. I don’t want to go back with any rounds.”

The platoon command team considered the exercise a success for several different reasons.

“It was a very successful night,”

Lowry said. “For one it was a different operation that we don’t normally get to do. Our main mission is terrain denial and counter fire. It was a morale booster for the Soldiers.”

Artillery elements are very powerful and destructive. There is much preparation that goes into a fire mission.

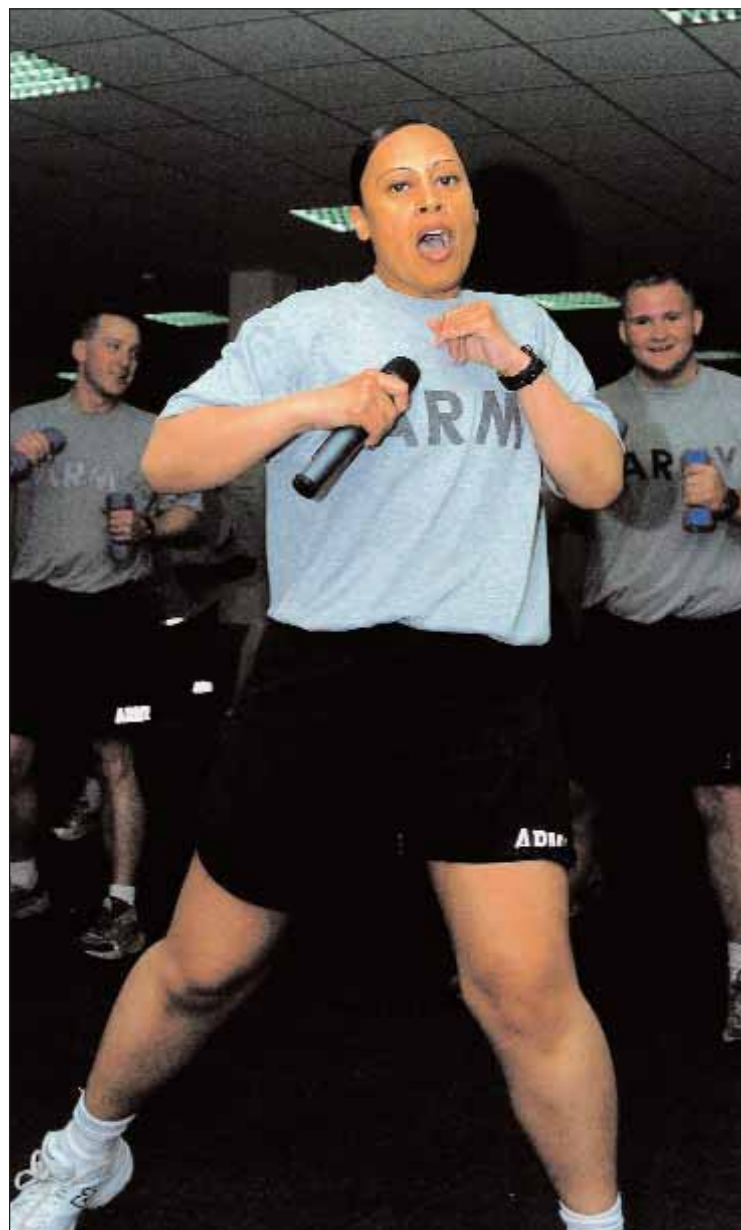
The Soldiers are trying to avoid damage to anything that is not expected to be in the impact area of the rounds.

“Basically we are trying to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people,” Lowry said. “We have to go out there and observe an area and make sure we don’t kill a guy trying to repair an irrigation ditch. We are trying to make allies, not enemies. If we make the whole country suffer we aren’t going to be able to accomplish that. Neither can we do that if we are causing damage to Iraqi property.”



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st Lt. John Dorffeld waits on the radio for a call from Soldiers operating the guns that they are ready to fire a round.

Let's get physical: Aviation Soldier teaches Taji aerobics class in spare time



Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth S. Brown leads her aerobics class.

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Avn. Bde. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Sweat beads roll down the brows of dozens of Soldiers. Their hearts are racing as they breathe harder with every passing moment. Some Soldiers feel the pain of their actions, but one thing is true for all of these Soldiers – they all made the choice to be here.

Are these Soldiers road marching through the desert? Jumping out of planes? Clearing a building in Baghdad?

Actually, they are all part of a class that features one thing – aerobics.

One of the numerous opportunities available to Soldiers here at Camp Taji is an aerobics class, which is conducted twice-a-day, three-days a week.

The classes are taught by Sgt. 1st Class Elizabeth S. Brown, also the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Property Book Office for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Brigade.

Brown's aerobic instruction began five years ago at Fort Stewart where she worked as the post partum pregnancy physical training instructor for the 3rd Infantry Division. When her deployment brought her to Taji, she volunteered to teach aerobics to servicemembers. She was surprised by the turnout she received on her first day of instruction.

"When I went to my first class, I was amazed to see how many people showed up, around 30," Brown said. "The

class continues to grow; now we get up to 60."

Classes attended by both males and females. Brown likes to see males in her classes because it breaks the stigma that aerobics is strictly for women. She often gets positive feedback from the male participants.

"I come three days a week," said Staff Sgt. Joker Botin, A Company, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion. "It is a good workout and the instruction is outstanding."

The aerobics class is an hour long and contains a cardio workout in which Brown tries to incorporate something for everyone.

"Aerobic routines come natural to me," Brown said. "I try to use moves that will work out different parts of the body, and I like to try new moves that people will enjoy. I will look in the crowd and gauge how they like the routine by the looks on their faces, and I adjust my routine accordingly."

Brown believes music is important when doing aerobics, and changes it often to fit a certain part of the routine.

"I have to feel the music in order to come up with the moves," she said. "I need upbeat and uplifting music. I like to try out different styles. For the future, I plan to incorporate some Latin music into my routine."

Despite having five years of experience, Brown said she still gets butterflies when teaching her classes.

"No matter how long I've been doing this, I still get nerv-

ous before each class," Brown said. "But once the class starts and I see people enjoying it, my nervousness diminishes."

Judging by the growing number of participants, people are indeed enjoying Brown's program.

"My friend told me about this class and it's pretty intense," said 2nd Lt. Kristi Hyatt, 3/3 Air Reconnaissance Battalion, who was participating in the class for the first time. "(Brown) makes it fun and she is very motivated."

Being an aerobics instructor keeps Brown busy. Along with instructing morning and evening classes three times a week and being in charge of the brigade's property book office, she also is taking two classes in order to get her Bachelor of Science in criminal justice.

"I have to manage my time and get into a routine," she said. "I enjoy doing both classes, so it's hard to give one up. Sometimes before a class I am drained, but once the music starts and I see how energetic people are, it wakes me up."

Despite her full schedule, Brown finds gratification in knowing she is giving something back to the Soldiers by helping them get fit.

"Today someone came up to me and told me how much they enjoyed the class and how I helped him get back into shape," Brown said. "That's the best part for me, knowing I can be of help to someone else. Hearing the positive feedback and helping people makes me know I'm doing something."

2/156th Inf. medics bring care to remote Iraqi village

Sgt. Thomas Benoit
256th BCT PAO

THINEEYAH, Iraq – Armed with school supplies and multivitamins, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division sponsored a medical civil affairs project held at Al Nassir School in Thineeyah, Iraq April 12.

The team provided basic medical assistance to children and adults as part of the ongoing effort by multi-national forces to help rebuild Iraq.

Once the patients were seen by the physician or physician assistant, they received various gifts or a care package containing toys for the children and dental hygiene products and toiletries.

School supplies and treats were freely given out to the delight of young Iraqi children; additionally, several pairs of shoes were given along with apparel.

If a patient had a diagnosis which was beyond the scope of the physicians, the families were educated via the interpreters on the importance of the abnor-

mality and stressed the importance of seeking an Iraqi physician.

"Multivitamins and medicines were dispensed to combat epilepsy, congenital abnormalities, and movement disorders in the elderly and post-traumatic palsies. The predominant health problems diagnosed included dermatological, gastrointestinal, and upper respiratory ailments," said Lt. Col. Joseph Dore, M.D., 256th BCT surgeon.

Once the MEDCAP in Thineeyah concluded, the team traveled to a remote nomadic settlement where the doctors treated several patients with the principal of "tailgate medicine" ranging from common cold ailments to redressing the bandages of a broken arm.

The remainder of care packages, clothing and school supplies from Al Nassir School were handed out.

Once care was complete at the settlement, the team was once again on the move to a new family of nomads herding sheep.

The family was very healthy and only required basic medical attention.



Photos by Sgt. Thomas Benoit

"Open up and say ahhhhh!" is an international language understood wherever medics go. Here, Spc. April Clark from Marydel, Md., C Company, 199th FSB, 256th BCT checks the vitals of a patient before the physician arrives during a medical civil affairs project held at Al Nassir school April 12.



Lt. Col. Joseph Dore, 199th FSB, gives a young goat a checkup April 12.

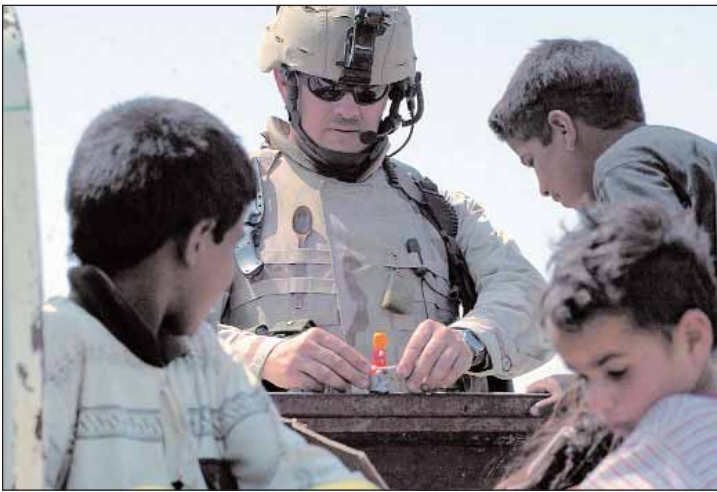
Reaching out

Hundreds of pounds of supplies distributed to Thineeyah villages

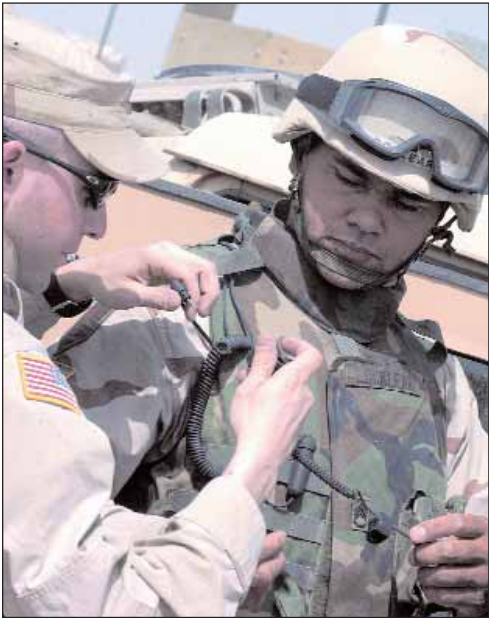
Sgt. Thomas Benoit
256th BCT PAO

THINEEYAH, Iraq – Soldiers from B Company, 1st Battalion, 156th Armor Regiment, 256th Brigade Combat Team distributed several hundred pounds of hygiene products, towels and blankets to numerous villages surrounding Thineeyah, Iraq, April 21. The care packages were sent to the Kids-for-Kids program managed by Sgt. Keith Bonnet and Staff Sgt. Shaun Warren with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 141st Field Artillery, 256th Brigade Combat Team stationed at Camp Liberty. For nomadic families who live in tents, herding sheep along Iraq's harsh country

side, is a way of life. Due to decades of oppression by the former regime, there are children and adults walking the cruel desert floor without shoes and only the clothes on their backs. Now, thanks to Soldiers dedicated to making a difference, Iraq's future has a running start at democracy. Since the program's inception, the Web site received more than 2.5 tons of donated supplies from 18 states. The Washington Artillery Veterans Associations raised a total of \$8,000 and purchased school supplies that were sent to Iraq. The Web site via Paypal raised in excess of \$400 to purchase local commodities. Goods are distributed throughout 256th BCT's area of operations.



Above: Staff Sgt. Don Chisum, B Btry., 1/141 FA amazes young Iraqi children with a toy that was donated to the Kids-for-Kids program and delivered by B Btry. Soldiers April 21. Right: An Iraqi mother and child are joyous after receiving donated blankets, towels and hygiene items.



Above: A young Iraqi girl looks back at her mother with a gleeful smile after receiving clothing from Soldiers. Left: Staff Sgt. Michael Gil from Kenner, La., helps Staff Sgt. Tony Locklear from Pembroke, N.C., with his communications equipment during a pre-combat inspection for the Kids-for-Kids program.

Acting neighborly ...



BAGHDAD — An Iraqi street merchant lends a hand and a hose to Soldiers of C Co. 443 Civil Affairs attached to 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Battalion, 256 Brigade Combat Team. The Soldiers took time to clean the windows of their M1114 up-armored humvee as Cpl. Hugo Sevilla from Staten Island, N.Y. and Spc. Edward Pickett from Houston, Texas, waited to leave an electrical site during 3/156th project assessment mission in northern Baghdad April 23.

Maj. Adam Shilling

MND-B EO office conducts first EO rep course

MND-B EO Office

Special to The Marne Express

The Multi-National Division-Baghdad Equal Opportunity Office hosted an Equal Opportunity Representative Course graduation ceremony April 8.

Present for the class was Command Sgt. Maj. William M. Grant, Task Force Baghdad command sergeant major, who extended congratulatory wishes to the Soldiers and expressed his guidance on how they, as EO representatives, serve as an integral part of their commander's EO program.

The EORC, which is normally a challenging two-week course at Fort Stewart, was condensed into a rigorous one-week course during which students participated in instructional classes, prepared and briefed presentations and conducted "Consideration of Others" methodology of training.

At the end of the week Soldiers were required to pass a

closed-book written examination as part of the final phase for graduation.

Staff Sgt. Vashana Chambers, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, was selected by the students as the most valuable contributor. She was awarded a certificate of achievement signed by Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Task Force Baghdad commanding general. Vashana also received a coin of excellence from Grant.

Also recognized was Staff Sgt. Kristine Cope, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 612th Engineer Battalion, who received a coin of excellence from Grant for her academic achievement of attaining a perfect score on the written examination.

The MND-B EO office will host the next EORC May 28 through June 3.

Soldiers interested in serving as their unit's EO representative can contact their chain of command or brigade EO advisor for prerequisites.



Courtesy photo

Members of the MND-B EO's first EOR course graduating class pause their training for a photo-op.

MiTTs training assists in smoother transition for forces

Staff Sgt. Billie Suttles

Office of the Staff Judge Advocate

This deployment has been a smorgasbord of new Army acronyms.

Of course, everyone else seems to know what this or that one means, but for some, they walk around with indiscriminate letters thrown together wondering what the heck everyone else is referring to.

I heard the newest acronym, MiTTs, right before the arrival of Capt. Berg, our newest Marne Operational Legal Team member.

MiTTs stands for Military Transition Teams. The MiTTs concept was developed in conjunction with a new initiative from Multi-National Security Transition-Iraq.

This is a huge project to stand up the Iraqi security forces to include the Iraqi Army. The IA will soon have a complete division and multiple brigades.

The concept is for our American Soldiers to live with the IA to teach them how to provide security for Iraq.

How does the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate play into all of this?

It goes back to Capt. Berg, the new MOLT attorney. Capt. Berg was given the mission of training the two 6th IA legal officers. He works with these gentlemen on a daily basis to teach them what their jobs are and how division staff works with brigade staff.

In addition, Capt. Berg is training IA basic trainees, called Jundi's.

The training consists of teaching rules of engagement, human rights and the Code of Military Discipline. The first training was conducted April 13 in Taji in the IA Basic Training complex.

The IA drill sergeant marched the trainees in, and with the assistance of the Iraqi attorney "Hussain," the class began.

The Jundi's were on their 12th day of a 13-day training cycle. Iraqi culture makes it difficult, if not almost impossible for one person to ask a question, because when one person would talk, the room would erupt with everyone talking over one another.

When this happened the drill instructors quickly regained control of the class and CPT Berg continued with

the training.

The highlight of the classroom instruction came when "Human Rights" booklets were passed out among the class. It was something they could hold and claim ownership to.

After the training was over, the Jundi's were marched out of the classroom by their drill instructors. Capt. Berg, Mr. Al-Nahi and Staff Sgt. Suttles followed and an impromptu photo opportunity began.

After a few photos, Hussain became the movie star of the afternoon.

U.S. Soldiers quickly and quietly melted into the background, hoping that this was one of the many steps slowly transitioning the U.S. forces back home.

1st IA Bde. taught fair treatment

Spc. Erin Robicheaux
256th BCT PAO

CAMP JUSTICE, Iraq – Although Iraq doesn’t have any formative documents proclaiming its people’s equality, and no Bill of Rights to uphold its citizens’ civil liberties, the Staff Judge Advocate team of the 3rd Infantry Division is doing its part to help mend the damage.

The Soldiers traveled to Forward Operating Base Justice to provide human rights training for detainees to the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

Capt. Jacob Lilly from Frederick, Md., chief counsel for detainee operations, told the Soldiers to be very



Spc. Erin Robicheaux
Capt. Jacob Lilly gives a group of 1/6 Iraqi Soldiers a class about human rights at FOB Justice.

careful how they treat prisoners. “All eyes of the world are watching Iraq, not just the Arab world,” Lilly said.

He emphasized that fair treatment of all human beings is very important to the war on terrorism.

“You must not allow abuse to come to the detainees, regardless of what they have done to a person and country that you love,” he said. “You all took an oath and must put aside emotions, you are all professional Soldiers.”

The training is part of Operation En-Sania, a human rights program for the entire Iraqi Army. Tracking and reporting of detainee abuse is part of the operation.

In the event of a situation, 3rd Inf. Div. SJA will engage the Ministry of Human Rights and Ministry of Defense, in order to address the specified abuses.

The training for the 1st IA Bde. is the first of its kind. As the battalions of the 6th IA Division expand, so will the training.

Lilly said there have been issues of detainee abuse in the Iraqi system and this was an attempt to address it.

The United States cannot order the Iraqi Army to build a system based on American standards, but they can show what has worked in the American system.

“We had our own growing pains with this issue, but we learned from our lessons and are passing the knowledge on,” said Lilly.

An intelligence officer with 1st IA said his Soldiers know from the former reign of Saddam that torture never brings positive results.

“We are to follow the standards of human rights; if we just deal with detainees humanely we will get better intelligence when we question them,” he said.

The officer received a degree in engineering, and though he wanted a career in his chosen profession, he said he and his Soldiers are ready to fight for an independent country before they resume their professional civilian lives.

“Iraq has some special circumstances that we need to deal with. We cannot do any kind of work if we do not stabilize the country,” he said.

According to the officer, since the Iraqi Army formed a strong presence in Iraq, a lot of the violence and terrorism has slowed down.

He attributed this to the help of the American and Multi-National Forces and for their training in areas such as detainee relations.

“Terror acts these days are different than before. The enemy is getting very tired,” he claimed. “If everyone is to be treated the same, the standard has to be humane treatment.”

Lilly explained the Soldiers may have to set aside their feelings and sometimes even beliefs for fair treatment of the detainees.

He said it may be hard because some detainees have done hard things, but the Soldiers have to be professional and do their duty, and that he believes in this system because it will instill positive results.

“I’m teaching human rights, human rights, human rights,” Lilly said. “And I believe to the deepest core of my heart, that everyone deserves the very basics.”

Taji’s 1/158th ATC team keeps Avn. aircraft flying straight

Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Avn. Bde. PAO

“Taxi to 3-4 via Bravo winds estimated calm, altimeter estimated 3002, hold short 3-4,” the Soldier says in one breath.

For most people, this phrase would be as foreign as Peruvian politics, but for Aviation Brigade pilots and Soldiers in the control tower, it’s common terminology.

The control tower Soldiers are part of the Air Traffic Control Team of D Company, 1st Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment.

The ATC team ensures that air traffic coming into Taji airfield flows smoothly.

D Co.’s 1st Sgt. David J. Ibsen said his Soldiers work hard to ensure their mission is completed.

“Here in Baghdad we are in charge of control tower and flight tracking operations. We ensure flight safety for all aircraft,” Ibsen said. “The Soldiers are working hard to ensure a safe, orderly and expeditious flow of air traffic throughout Iraq.”

To help complete their mission, Soldiers are in the control tower at all hours to ensure that helicopters land safely.

Spc. Carlos R. Munoz, a D Co. ATC specialist, believes his responsibilities allow for order on the airfield.

“Air traffic control is responsible for all flights com-

ing in and out,” Munoz said. “We have to separate the helicopters and land them. Airspace can get crowded, so we provide positive control of the helicopter traffic here.”

Sgt. Rowland A.T. Conception, ATC specialist, says the control tower has to pass important information to the pilots.

The controllers inform pilots when controlled detonations occur and when quick reaction forces are being dispatched, and they sequence helicopters for landing and take off.

“We have to get important flight data to the pilots,” Conception said. “Pilots can’t see everything out there. We see the whole picture. Pilots rely on us to be their eyes because we get a 360-degree view of the airfield.”

The D Co. Soldiers are also doing their part in helping the transition of Iraqi forces to take control of their government.

The company has been training Iraqi Soldiers in air traffic control duties.

The main instructor, ATC chief Sgt. 1st Class Antoine D. Williams, said the Iraqis are dedicated and willing to learn.

“We are teaching them basic ATC knowledge,” Williams said. “They are learning things such as how to separate aircraft, weather training and basic flight rules.”

The Iraqi forces being trained have prior air traffic control experience, but the



Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Spc. Carlos R. Munoz, right, and Sgt. Rowland A.T. Conception, both D Co., 1/158th Avn. Regt. ATC specialists, control incoming and outgoing helicopters from the control tower at Taji airfield.

Soldiers still have some challenges to overcome.

“How the Iraqis control traffic is different,” Williams said. “The Iraqi forces control traffic more leniently. We are trying to show them how to be more aggressive in controlling aircraft movement so they can establish more positive control.”

Air traffic controllers also have their own language when communicating with pilots, which Munoz said can sometimes be difficult to translate to Iraqi forces.

“We use a lot of different terminology, and with the language barrier it’s sometimes difficult to communicate,” he explained. “We will go over scenarios to help explain some

of the phraseology we use.”

Williams has a positive outlook on the training he is giving to the Iraqi Soldiers.

“They are fast learners and what we are teaching them is part of the bigger plan,” he said. “At some point they will take control of the airfield. This is just one step in helping them establish their country and running their own army.”

Useful Arabic Phrases			
English	Arabic	English	Arabic
God bless you	raMAhak allah	Good evening	meSAH alKHAIR
Come with me	taAl ma'ai	Good evening (reply)	meSAH alNOOR
What's your name?	shinu ISmak?	Show me your ID	raWEEni haWEtak
My name is ...	ISme ...	I have no ID	MA indee haWEEya

Renovations spruce up two Baghdad schools

Spc. Brian Schroeder

2/10 Inf. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Two ribbon cutting ceremonies were held in the Mansour district of Baghdad to celebrate the completion of recent renovations at local schools April 10.

One primary and one secondary school received new restroom plumbing, fresh paint on all the walls and a reconstructed playground area.

The three-month project, costing more than \$70,000, was completed by local Iraqi contractors with financial assistance from the U.S. Army.

The ribbon cutting ceremony at the primary school was conducted with much fanfare. Students lined the hallways, sang songs and danced.

The Iraqi flag was raised fol-

lowed by children reciting the Iraqi pledge of allegiance and singing the Iraqi national anthem.

Before the ceremony, the headmistress of the school thanked the U.S. Army for its assistance. She said that the renovations are an extremely generous asset for education of the children that are the "people of the upcoming and prosperous future" of Iraq.

"We are extremely happy with the new renovations," said a primary school teacher. "I felt bad teaching the kids under the old conditions. These kids are the future of Iraq and we should take care of them and give them a good environment to learn."

The ribbon cutting ceremony at the secondary school was not as jubilant as that of the elementary school's celebration.

Upon arriving at the school, Maj. Rob Menist, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment executive officer was presented with a threat letter the school received just a few days prior.

The letter stipulated that if Americans are welcomed back into the school, "god's law" would be brought to the school.

Despite the threat, the headmistress invited the Soldiers inside. She said the threat will not discourage her from providing a safe place for her students to learn.

"Thank you for what you have done for our school and for the girls; it is nice now," she said. "It is now a much better place for the girls to learn."

Menist commended the headmistress for her bravery and courage for inviting the Soldiers back into her school

after receiving the threatening message.

"It takes a lot of fortitude and courage on the part of the headmistress to let us in after

receiving the letter," Menist said. "These kids now have a good place to study and learn despite the threats from terrorists."



Photos by Spc. Brian Schroeder

Above: Two Iraqi boys salute their country's flag while reciting the Iraqi national anthem during activities celebrating their school's completed renovations.

Left: Maj. Rob Menist, left, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment executive officer celebrates with the headmistress of a western Baghdad primary school construction projects.



EOD prevents possible tragedy by blowing things up

Pfc Dan Balda

4th BCT PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PROSPERITY, Iraq – On April 14, a vehicle borne improvised explosive device detonated, killing and badly injuring many unfortunate people in the area.

There were two other bombs that had been placed at the site. Luckily for the people in the vicinity, an explosive ordnance disposal team assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team came to the site to take care of the unexploded ordnance.

The team calmly cleared the area of civilians and established a safety cordon around the car. Once everybody was clear, they reduced the once-deadly bomb to dust.

"I love being able to go to a situation that's chaos, where nobody knows what's going on and you have media and civilians milling around. I love going to a situation and making things happen, making it organized," said Navy Lt. Mark Yoon, officer in charge of the EOD Mobile Detachment Unit 2.

"It's scary driving around Baghdad and not knowing what's laying by the side of the road or sitting in someone's trunk," said Sgt. Brandon Sanders, a driver assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

The best tactic Soldiers can use to counteract the threat of IED's is to do a better job when they dismount from the vehicles to do their "5s and 25s."

This refers to walking five meters around your vehicle in every direction,

scanning the ground to make sure there are no explosive devices planted there and then visually checking the perimeter 25 meters in every direction.

"Take more time with your 5s and 25s, they will save your life," Yoon said. "If you have to dismount from your vehicle, do them extremely thoroughly. Kick the dirt around, move trash with your feet. Your feet are your best friend when you are doing 5s and 25s."

Like a lot of his coworkers in EOD, Yoon attributes his love of his job to childhood experimentation.

"I was like a lot of little kids, I liked to blow stuff up," Yoon said. "Demo is definitely the cool part of the job. We use it as a tool; we're not just here to blow the heck out of everything. We're here to save personal property and lives."

Yoon and his comrades do as much as possible to make the blast as little of a threat to the local citizens and buildings as possible.

"We weigh in what the surrounding environment is," Yoon said. "If it's in a deserted field, I'm going to blow it, but if it's in a residential area, I'm going to do something completely different. We go to huge lengths to make sure personal property isn't harmed. If

it was my car or my house, I wouldn't want it messed up. I always try to take that into consideration."

"I was in the chow hall at (FOB) Falcon when they had a controlled detonation for a bunch of weapons they confiscated," Sanders said. "They didn't tell anybody before hand, so when they blew the stuff up everybody thought we were being attacked. People were diving under tables,

throwing all their gear on, it was pretty funny. But when I thought about it, I was pretty glad (EOD) blew that stuff up before it was used on some Soldiers."

The success of the EOD team can be attributed to two main things; teamwork and education.

Yoon's staff consists of only one person, an E-5, but saying that the Sailor "works for him" is a misnomer.

Sometimes they take turns as far as who is in charge of a site.

"I'll get people that say, 'Oh he's just an E-5.' No way, he's just as smart, if not smarter than me on this stuff," Yoon said. "He can do everything I can do. In Navy EOD we are all trained the same. He has a different perspective on things, it's a partnership. I work in a small shop so I

"It's very intense; it's you versus the bomb-maker. It's a little like chess, you have to plan out all your moves beforehand."

Navy Lt. Mark Yoon
OIC, EOD Mobile Detachment 2

Do you have a creative idea for something new in *The Marne Express*?

Do you have a funny or exceptional photo you want to show people?

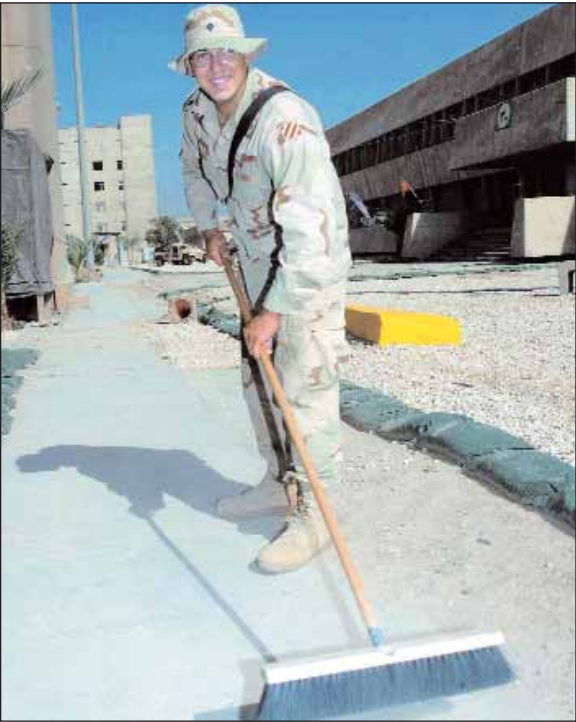
If so contact brenda.benner@id3.army.mil

All submissions are welcome and valued!



Sgt. Chris Wilburn, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, stands watch as the sun sets.

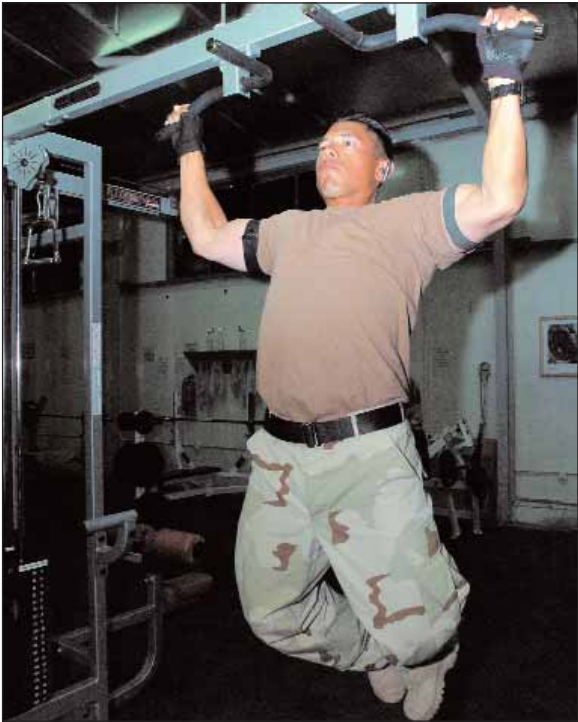
Courtesy photo



Spc. Ben Brody
Spc. Jonathan Mardis, an A Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment gunner, sweeps the sidewalk at Camp Loyalty, Iraq, April 29.



Spc. Jennifer Fitts
Watching over his Soldiers from his Bradley Fighting Vehicle, 1st. Lt. Manuel Prado, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment keeps a close eye on the street while they overwatch the area from a nearby rooftop.



Spc. Derek Del Rosario
Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Martinez, C Co. 3rd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment (Attack Recon), gets in a workout by doing pullups at the Camp Taji fitness facility.

COMING SOON

The Marne Express is still waiting to run its new column, "Rocky's Hydrant" ...
BECAUSE WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

We know you have gripes, questions and constructive criticism about - well, anything and everything - and we're giving you this opportunity to tell us about them.

Just make sure your comments meet the following criteria:

- 1) No foul language - you don't want all those nasty words to crowd out the point of your message, do you?
- 2) If you have a problem, offer a solution - anybody can hate a situation; we want to know how you would fix it.
- 3) Keep it concise - save the rambling diatribes for your buddies; we don't have enough space for all that here.

AND HERE'S THE BEAUTY OF IT:

Nobody has to know who you are! If you would like to remain anonymous, just tell us. If not, please supply your name, unit and hometown, so everyone can thank you for your helpful suggestions.

E-MAIL emily.wilsoncroft@id3.army.mil with your submissions.

We're looking forward to hearing from you!

the FACTS on vehicle safety

- 1. Purpose.** To provide information to the Secretary of the Army relating to the Army humvee accidents in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.
- 2. Background.** The SECARMY directed the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center to examine humvee accidents in the OIF/OEF theaters. USACRC is unable to calculate accident rates for the various vehicle types as the number of vehicles in theater over time as well as the cumulative number of vehicle miles driven is unknown. Additionally, USACRC is not able to determine from the accident data whether the vehicles had armor kits (factory made or locally fabricated) installed. When the armor kits are installed the nomenclature of the vehicle does not change nor is there currently any mandated method of identifying the vehicles.
- 3. Facts.**
- a. From Sept. 12, 2001 through March 21 there have been 221 Class A-D Army humvee accidents in the OEF/OIF theaters of operations resulting in 62 fatalities. Only 13 of the accidents and one of the fatalities in the Central Command theater of operations occurred in OEF, the remainder occurred in OIF.
- b. Within the humvee family, the M998 (standard utility model) accounts for 34 percent of the accidents (75) and the M1114 (up-armored) accounts for over 22 percent of the accidents (49). The M1025 (utility armament model) and the M1097 (utility model) account for nine percent (20) and seven percent (16) of the humvee accidents, respectively. The remaining models each account for less than three percent of the accidents. "Unspecified" humvee models (the specific model of the vehicle was not reported) make up 15 percent of the accidents (33). (Note: so far all fiscal year '05 accident reports have identified the specific humvee model involved).
- c. Of the 62 fatalities associated with the humvee nearly 29 percent (18) occurred in "unspecified" models. Up-armored M1114 humvees account for 32 percent (20) of the fatalities, 70 percent of those (14) occurred in FY05. Nearly 18 percent (11) of the fatalities occurred in the M998 and 15 percent (nine) occurred with the M1025. The remainder of the humvee models account for less than two percent of the fatalities each.
- d. In general, the number of Class A humvee accidents in theater each month has trended up since August 2004 culminating in eight in February. To date, there has only been one Class A accident in March. Since FY03, the number of accidents and fatalities in the M998 has declined and the number of accidents and fatalities in the up-armored M1114 has increased. This is likely due to two factors: first, the density of up-armored and add-on armor humvees has steadily increased over time; second exposure of unarmored vehicles has declined due to local policies not allowing unarmored vehicles to operate outside of the Forward Operating Bases. Consequently, the exposure of up-armored and add-on armor vehicles has likely increased while the exposure of un-armored vehicles has declined.
- e. USACRC was able to identify 466 Army military personnel involved in the 211 accidents. Of those, seatbelt usage was reported for 253 Soldiers. Of the 253 Soldiers, 154 were reported to have worn seatbelts, 76 were reported to have not worn seatbelts, and the remaining 23 were reported as "unknown." Of those who were wearing seatbelts, only four percent (six) received fatal injuries and 42% (66) received injuries that resulted in lost work-days while 55 Soldiers (36 percent) received no injuries and 27 (17 percent) required first-aid only. Of those who were not wearing seatbelts, 17 Soldiers (22 percent) received fatal injuries and 31 (41 percent) received injuries that resulted in lost work-days. Only 17 Soldiers (22 percent) who were not wearing seatbelts received no injury in the accident and 10 (13 percent) required first aid. The data clearly indicates that seatbelt usage reduces the severity of the injuries sustained in an accident.
- f. In 79 of the 211 accidents (37 percent) the vehicle rolled over resulting in 40 of the 62 fatalities (64 percent). M1114s account for 26 (32 percent) of the rollover accidents and 18 (45 percent) of the rollover fatalities. There were 51 cases of the vehicle running off the road, and 44 cases of the humvee colliding with another moving vehicle. (Note: There can be more than one type of event associated with each accident – i.e. the vehicle can run off the road then overturn resulting in two separate events for one accident).
- g. USACRC is currently unable to determine the familiarity of units with the up-armored humvees and its impact on likelihood of accidents. However, Infantry units account for 20 percent of the accidents, Armor units account for 15 percent followed by Field Artillery and Military Police units at 10 percent each and Engineer units at seven percent.
- h. Data limitations precluded identifying the specific causes of many accidents, however, predominant individual Soldier errors associated with the humvee accidents were a result of overconfidence, being in a hurry, and fatigue/lack of sleep. Additionally, USACRC investigators determined that several M1114 accidents were a result of the driver not being able to see hazards in the vicinity of the vehicle and the other vehicle occupants did not or could not adequately communicate with the driver as he approached the hazard. Consequently, in some instances, the vehicle departed the roadway and rolled when the driver over-corrected in his attempt to recover.

Army National Guard retention benefits

Extension and Reenlistment Bonus Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soldiers may reenlist or extend within 12 months (in-theater) of their current estimated time of separation or immediately if currently under stop-loss and past their ETS date.• Soldier must have less than 16 years of total service at ETS (15 years, 11 months, 29 days on extension/reenlistment start date)• Soldiers may have received previous reenlistment/extension bonuses.• Soldiers in-theater DO NOT need to be MOS qualified.• Soldier must not be barred or flagged.• Soldier can be in either a MTOE or TDA unit.• Soldiers who have past their ETS date and are on Stop Loss may reenlist at any time. The date of reenlistment will establish a new ETS date. Time served under Stop Loss will not be deducted from the new reenlistment obligation.• AGR/Technicians must serve 6 months from the start date of their new contract prior to re-affiliating with his/her full-time state position in order to retain the full bonus. Reenlistment / Extension Bonuses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First three-year option: \$7500 ONE LUMP SUM PAYMENT• Second three-year option: \$6,000	ONE LUMP SUM PAYMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six-year option: \$15,000 LUMP SUM PAYMENT (Two payments, back-to-back) <i>*All payments for contracts signed in theater are tax-free.</i> Previous Three-Year Extension/Reenlistment Bonus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soldiers currently under the Prior Service Enlistment Bonus may reenlist/extend for a second three-year \$6,000 bonus (if in 90-day window, paid 50/50) OR three-year \$7,500/six-year \$15,000 bonus if past ETS and on stop-loss.• Soldiers who have received a previous three-year National Guard reenlistment bonus may reenlist/extend for another three-year \$6,000/six-year \$15,000 bonus. Soldiers who have already completed both a first and second three-year reenlistment bonus may contract for either a new first three-year \$7,500 or six-year \$15,000. <i>*All payments for contracts signed in theater are tax-free.</i> Student Loan Repayment Program (M-Day Soldiers only) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soldiers with existing loans may reenlist or extend for 6 years for the SLRP agreement. The amount of SLRP will not exceed \$18,000 with a maximum payment of 15% or \$500, whichever is greater (\$3,000 cap per	<p>Soldier per year). Payment is based on the original principal and does not include interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soldiers must have served the last three consecutive years in an active drilling status in the ARNG. Inactive National Guard service constitutes a break in service.• Soldiers may not have received the SLRP as an enlistment, re-enlistment, or extension option in the past. A Soldier reenlisting or extending will not be authorized payment on loans established after the contract has been signed. Mongtomery GI Bill-Kicker (M-Day Soldiers only, E-1 to E-5 with less than 14 years of service) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional \$200 per month in GI Bill benefits• MOS-qualified/Served last three consecutive years in NG/Requires six-year contract• Modified Table of Equipment units only Federal Tuition Assistance Program (M-Day Soldiers only) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Federal Tuition Assistance Program is now being offered to all M-Day Soldiers in the Army National Guard.• This is a 100% tuition assistance program. The annual cap for the program \$4,500 per year, paid at a rate of \$166 per quarter-hour or \$250 per	<p>semester hour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 30, Chapter 1606 and 1607 benefits can be combined with the FTA Program. Dental Program <p>All National Guard Soldiers are eligible to purchase the United Concordia Dental Plan. This program covers cleanings, X-rays, cavities, root canals, etc. and 50% of orthodontics. www.ucci.com</p> TRICARE Health Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For every 90 days a Soldier is deployed, he will earn one year of TRICARE Health coverage eligibility.• Soldiers must remain in the reserve component to receive benefits. <p>Monthly premium required; Individual \$75 per month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family \$233 per month.• All National Guard Soldiers are eligible to enroll their family members in the TRICARE Standard program. www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect• At the end of the deployment all Soldiers and their families will have 180 days of medical and 90 days (Soldier only) of dental coverage. Contact your local Army National Guard Retention NCO <p>KUWAIT: Camp Arifjan: DSN: 318.430.7193 / Cell: 937.7659</p>	<p>Camp Buehring/Navistar: DSN: 844-1137 / Cell: 786.3181</p> <p><i>/IRAQ:</i> Camp Victory (Baghdad): DSN: 539.2021 / 822.2954</p> <p>LSA Anaconda (Balad): DSN: 829.1508 / 1128</p> <p>FOB Danger (Tikrit): DVNT : 302.536.0202</p> <p>FOB Warhorse (Baqubah): DVNT: 302.553.3057</p> <p>FOB Warrior (Kirkuk): DSN: 460.0100</p> <p>FOB Caldwell: DVNT: 302.589.1043</p> <p>Camp Cooke (Taji): DSN: 856.0813/DVNT: 302.531.6544</p> <p>Camp Liberty (Baghdad): DSN: (318) 847-2352</p> <p>Camp Summerall (Bayji): DVNT: 302.536.5047</p> <p>AFGHANISTAN: Bagram AB: DSN: 318.231.4353/2234</p>
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In Memory Of Our Fallen Soldiers...



1st Sgt. Timothy J. Millsap, 70th Eng.
Cpl. Travis R. Bruce, 170th MP Co.
Cpl. Aleina Ramirez Gonzalez, 1/3 BTB
Cpl. Glenn Watkins, 1/184 Inf.
Spc. Jacob M. Pfister, 3/7 Inf.

Spc. Gary W. Walters Jr., 1/9 FA
Pfc. Sam W. Huff, 170th MP Co.
Pfc. Joseph L. Knott, 3rd ACR
Pfc. Steven F. Sirko, 1/30 Inf.
Pfc. Kevin S. K. Wessel, 3/7 Inf.



DESERT JUSTICE

Get help keeping your POAs current in theater

CPT Gary McNeal
OSJA

Many Soldiers got a power of attorney prior to deploying overseas. For some of them, their situation has changed and so has their needs regarding a power of attorney. Many questions are asked about whether to get a general power of attorney or a special power of attorney, how long they last, and what to do if the Soldier does not want the power of attorney to remain in effect any longer. A general power of attorney allows the person that you name as your attorney-in-fact to do essentially anything that you can do. Some examples of these things are to buy and sell things, to take money out of banks accounts, and to handle other financial affairs such as paying taxes or taking out a loan. The business or agency that the attorney-in-fact deals with, such as a bank, does not have to accept the power of attorney. They may require a special power of attorney to accomplish certain things. Special powers of attorney limit the things that the attorney-in-fact can do to the specific things that are named in the power of attorney. In many cases, a special power of attorney is a better way to go if you know that you only want someone to do certain things for you, while you also want to protect yourself from granting them a wide range of powers.

Powers of attorney will remain in effect until their expiration date or until they are revoked. If you have a power of attorney that you want to get rid of, you need to do a revocation of the power of attorney. You need to provide notice of the revocation to the attorney-in-fact, and to anyone else that may have a copy of it on file, such as a bank. In addition, you should either destroy the original, or execute a revocation which you may do through the Legal Assistance Office. Powers of attorney can be very useful, but they can also be very harmful. Only give a power of attorney to an individual that you really trust. You are responsible for the actions of the attorney-in-fact, so if they purchase something in your name for instance that you really did not want or could not afford, you are responsible for it. Make sure you get the right power of attorney to suit your needs: maybe you need to have someone do only one or two certain tasks for you that can be accomplished through a special power of attorney, rather than giving that person a broad grant of authority with the general power of attorney. If you need to get a power of attorney or need to get one revoked, you may go to the Marne Legal Assistance Office located at Camp Liberty, or see your Brigade Command Judge Advocate. You may call 242-4568 if you have questions regarding powers of attorney.

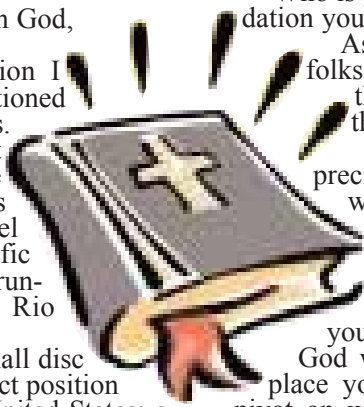
The Marne Tax Center is still open for business!
Monday through Saturday
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Camp Liberty
Legal Services Center
Building C25

Chaplain's Corner
Where is your central focus?

Chaplain (Capt.) Glenn Palmer
3rd Inf. Div.

"You set the earth on its foundations, so that it shall never be shaken"...
Psalm 104:5

Dear brothers and sisters in God,
Most of us in the battalion I serve (2/70 Armor) are stationed and live at Fort Riley, Kansas. In north central Kansas not too far from Fort Riley there is a place called the Meades Ranch where the 39th parallel from the Atlantic to the Pacific crosses the 98th meridian running from Canada to the Rio Grande. The government uses a small disc on the ranch to locate the exact position of every other point in the United States; a scientifically proven and recognized reference point. That disc is the dead center of the country. So far, no mistakes have been made and none are expected. Ocean liners and commercial planes and



government construction projects must use utilize this location to the very inch. Not to do so, to guess, can be costly and dangerous. What and who is your reference point? Who is the dead center of your life around which all else revolves? Who is your cornerstone, upon which foundation you build your life? As a pastor/chaplain I meet so many folks whose lives are in chaos because there is no reference point other than the self or what feels good. We all need a reference point to be precise and rooted and anchored so that we can live fully the life God calls us to live. God's will and desire is to be your reference point. God wants to be the center of your life. God wants to be the one in whom you place your trust and hope and belief, the pivot on which your life swings and hinges; and that is life-giving, awesome news for all God's people.

PRO DEO ET PATRIA
FOR GOD AND COUNTRY
'THUNDERCROSS'

Division Chapel Services
Camp Liberty

Friday 7 p.m. Jewish Service	10:30 a.m.: Roman Catholic Mass
Saturday 10 p.m.: Seventh Day Adventist	1 p.m.: Lutheran
Sunday 9 a.m.: Contemporary Protestant	3 p.m.: Gospel Protestant
	5 p.m.: Christian Non-instrumental
	8 p.m.: Collective Protestant

Rhythm of the Marne

With the 3rd Infantry Division firmly in authority of Task Force Baghdad, the 3rd Inf. Div. band, the "Rhythm of the Marne," is operational and available to provide musical and ceremonial support throughout the division's footprint, including all assigned and attached units. The band is capable of providing several diverse musical ensembles to include ceremonial band, stage band, Latin band, jazz combo, rock combo, R&B combo, trombone quartet, brass quintet, solo piano and ceremonial bugler. The unit also encompasses the Division Color Guard.

Contact Information

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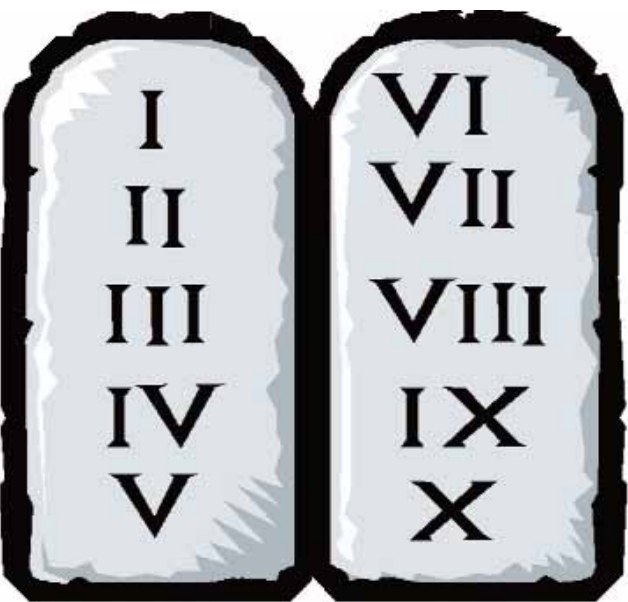
Marne Medical Mentor ... a prescription for good health from your Docs in the Rock

The 10 Commandments of preventing heat injury

Capt. Lalini Pillay
Avn. Bde. Environmental Science Officer

It is only a matter of weeks before we start to see temperatures regularly hitting the upper 80s and 90s, and it won't be long after that before we will start to see temperatures in the triple digits. It is NOT too early to start educating Soldiers on the how to prevent them from becoming a heat casualty. Below are simple steps that ALL of you can follow to prevent yourselves and your battle buddies from becoming heat casualties. 1. Provide adequate water and ensure water breaks are taken as needed. Thirst is not an adequate indicator of dehydration. Alcohol, coffee, soft drinks, and sports drinks are not good substitutes for water. 2. Ensure Soldiers gradually adjust to working in the heat. Acclimatization is essential in preventing heat injuries. 3. Schedule work and rest periods. Schedule heavy work for the cooler part of the day (morning or late afternoon). The body generates more heat

when heavy work is being performed. 4. Avoid overexertion. Use mechanical aids whenever possible. Assign tasks between several Soldiers to reduce the stress on individuals. 5. Use shaded areas like trees, buildings and tents to reduce radiant heating. The temperature in the sun and under the canopy of a tree can vary from eight degrees to 20 degrees Fahrenheit. 6. Encourage the use of sun screens to protect exposed skin. 7. Wear loose-fitting, light-weight clothing. Do not layer clothing; more clothing increases the risk of heat injury. 8. Monitor Wet Bulb Globe Temperature so the heat-stress index can be evaluated. Environmental conditions, such as temperatures above 70 degrees (80 degrees at night), direct sunlight and humidity add to heat stress. The wind reduces the risk of heat stress by increasing the evaporation of sweat. 9. Train Soldiers to recognize and treat heat injuries and encourage them to monitor each other for signs of heat stress. 10. Conduct safety meetings to emphasize special heat spell procedures. Be prepared to provide med-



ical assistance. If you have any questions or need additional information, use the 11th Commandment below: 11. Contact your Environmental Science Officer.

Intramural basketball tournament

B Co., 92nd Eng.

‘Dawgs’ outdo 3/3 Sig.

‘Bladerunners,’ 58-44

Staff Sgt. Ken Walker
Spec. Emily J. Wilsoncroft
3rd Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Task Force Baghdad Soldiers got the opportunity to blow off some steam with a little friendly competition in the form of an intramural basketball tournament here April 24.

The championship game was between the B Company, 92nd Engineer Group “Dawgs” and the 3rd Signal Company, 3rd Signal Detachment “Bladerunners,” and resulted in a Bladerunner loss.

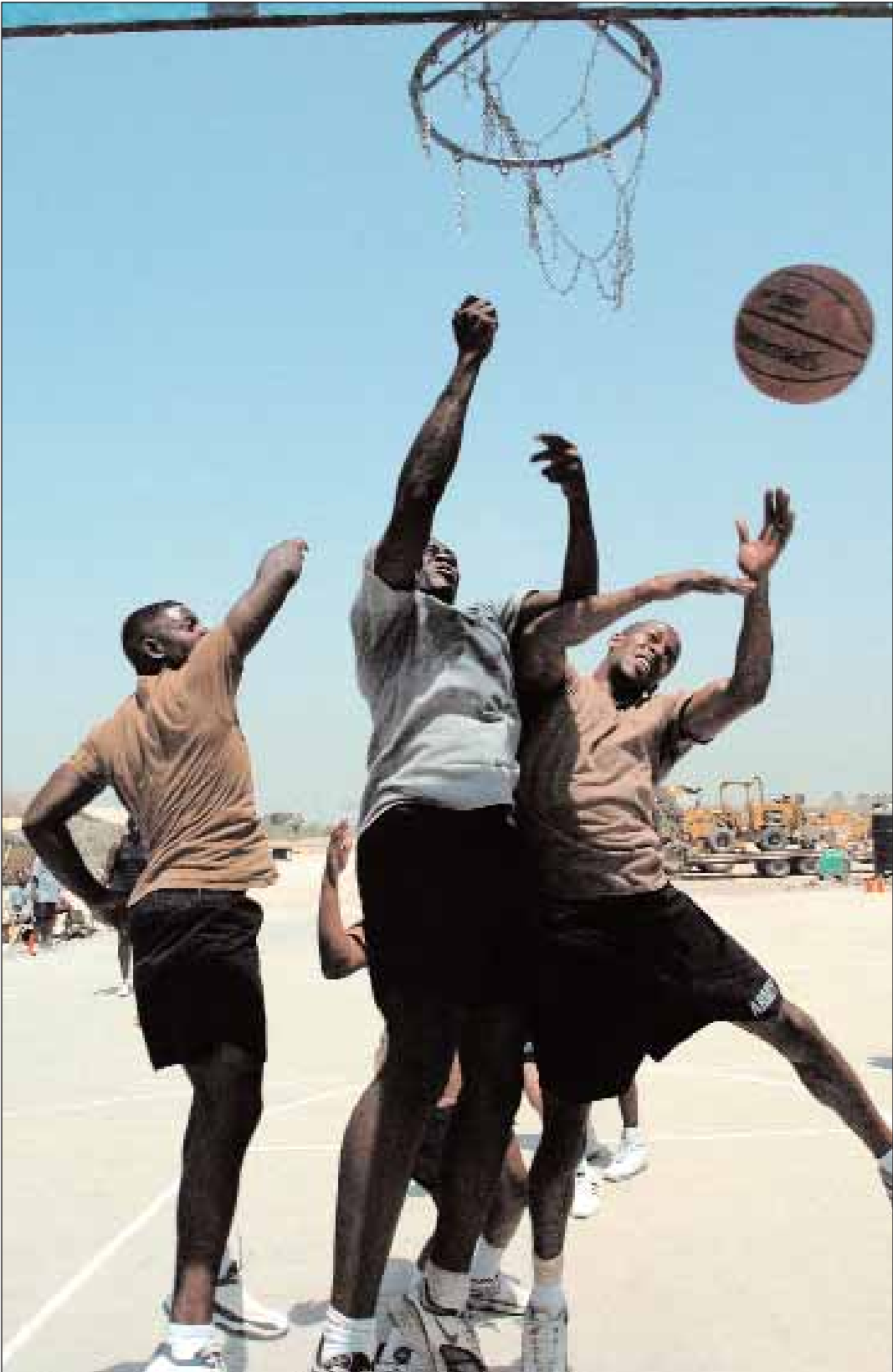
According to the Soldiers who participated, however, the age-old maxim applies: it doesn’t matter whether you win or lose, just how you play the game.

In this case, just the opportunity to play in the tourney was enough for Liberty Soldiers.

“The tournament was a wonderful distraction from our daily routine,” said 1st Lt. Andrea Riley, a B Co., 92nd Eng. team member. “It enabled us to focus our energy and efforts through healthy competition.”

Sgt. 1st Class Belinda Rhanes, 3rd Infantry Division noncommissioned officer in charge of Morale, Welfare and Recreation, shared Riley’s sentiments.

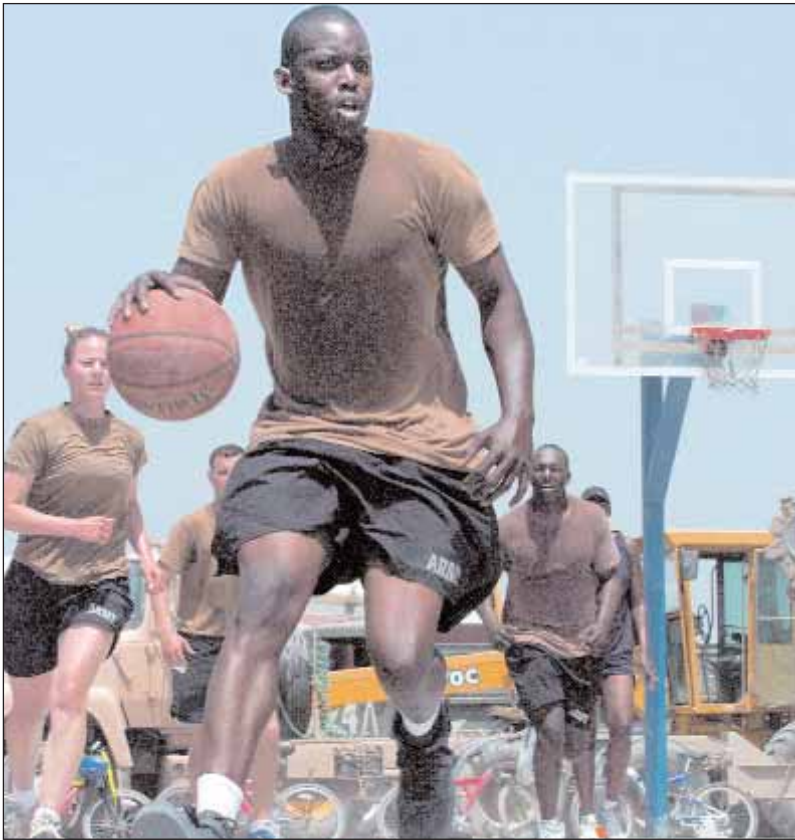
“The tournament was an excellent way for the different branches of service to come together and compete,” she said. “It was an also an opportunity for the troops to relieve some stress and a great morale booster. I look forward to seeing more troops come out and participate. The (Kellog, Brown and Root) and MWR representatives made this event a success and I want to thank them for their contributions.”



Photos by Staff Sgt. Ken Walker

Above: “Dawgs” (brown t-shirts) and “Bladerunners” battle for a rebound during the intramural basketball tournament championship game at Camp Liberty April 24.

Left: Pvt. Tredale Langston, a 92nd Eng. “Dawg,” dribbles the ball down the court followed by his teammates. “This game will be a good one,” Langston said before play began. “I know we will come out strong and we will try to use the inside game to open up the outside game and vice-versa. All in all, we want to have fun and hopefully come out on top as winners.”



Cartoon Corner

★ OPERATION ELUSIVE CONCEPT ★

SIR! SIR! YOU NEED TO HURRY TO YOUR OFFICE RIGHT AWAY TO SEE THIS PATIENT WHO JUST ARRIVED!

MY GOD! THIS HAS TO BE THE WORST CASE OF TRAUMATIC COMBAT STRESS THAT I HAVE SEEN IN MY ENTIRE CAREER!

BY CHRIS ASHBY - WWW.ELUSIVE-CONCEPT.COM

ACTUALLY, SIR, HE'S THE JAG TAX ASSISTANT ON BASE.

The Book Nook

William Boyd’s ‘Fascination’: Multivitamin stories

Sgt. 1st Class David Abrams
3rd Inf. Div.

In graduate school, my creative writing instructor would make us write one-sentence summaries of short stories she assigned us to read (in Hollywood, this is known as “the pitch”).

While reading William Boyd’s new story collection, “Fascination,” I decided to apply this exercise to his short fictions:

- An 11-year-old boy is given a bicycle as a gift from his mother’s lover so that he’ll ride around the French countryside while the adulterers have afternoon sex. (“Varengeville”)
- A filmmaker’s journal gradually reveals his obsession for his leading lady. (“Notebook No. 9”)
- An architect is possessed by a 19th-century Scottish engineer, causing him to lose his job, his wife and perhaps his sanity. (“A Haunting”)
- While putting his body-building girlfriend on a steroid regimen, a philosophy student wrestles with the hypothesis that the mind can exist independently of matter. (“The Mind/Body Problem”)

Paring Boyd’s plots down to single sentences, however, robs these and the other 10 tales in “Fascination” of their artistry, depth and complexity. There are strata upon strata here on these pages.

The most memorable short

stories — by everyone from Anton Chekhov to Alice Munro — are novels condensed into miniature, hard gems.

Or, as Boyd himself recently wrote in The Guardian: “Like a multivitamin pill, a good short story can provide a compressed blast of discerning, intellectual pleasure, one no less intense than that delivered by a novel, despite the shorter duration of its consumption.”

In “Fascination,” which is packed with literary multivitamins, the author of the novels “Any Human Heart” and “A Good Man in Africa” wades neck-deep into the swamp of humanity to bring us 14 tales of desperation and desire.

Boyd’s writing is sharp, precise and often very funny. In this collection, it is also as diverse in tone, structure and subject matter as any book of short stories I’ve read.

Some of the stories read like grad school writing exercises (“Beulah Berlin, An A-Z,” for instance, is broken into 26 sections, each ending with a word that linguistically reverberates into the first word of the next section).

But beneath the clever narrative tricks lies not only a fascination with language but with the way we react in moments of crisis, especially those times we try to suppress sexual urges.

One story’s epigraph, a

quote from Chekhov, seems especially apropos to the collection as a whole: “Every person lives his real, most interesting life under the cover of secrecy.”

Not coincidentally, that particular story is “The Woman on the Beach with a Dog,” a re-vision of the master’s “The Lady With the Dog.”

Boyd moves the adulterers’ rendezvous from a beach in Yalta to Cape Cod in 1944. When the man, Garrett Rising, arrives at the crossroads where he must choose between wife and lover, Boyd turns on a brilliant show of Chekhovian agony as the lovers wallow in post-coital conversation in a motel room whose carpet is patterned with knights in shining armor:

“We have to do something,” she said.

“We will, I promise.”

“What’re we going to do?”

He felt a small uplifting of his spirits now that he knew she was ready to try it with him, this life of moments of happiness.

“I’ll think of something.”

“What?”

“I don’t know,” he said, staring at the knights on their prancing chargers. “I don’t know.”

Most of Boyd’s characters are caught in similar

moments of indecision. As the narrator of “Beulah Berlin, An A-Z” muses, “How do you know when your life is intrinsically uninteresting? You just do. Some people live quietly, unhappily, with this knowledge; others do something about it.”

Some readers — especially those turned off by Woody Allen films — might find this collection unbearably full of self-indulgent anxiety.

However, I for one was fascinated by the way Boyd turns angst into art and consistently makes it a fresh experience from story to story.

The collection’s standout centerpiece, “Incandescence” — true to its title — burns with the kind of artistry that turns a piece of short fiction into a work of imagination that expands beyond the boundaries of the page.

Boyd creates something every bit as complex and dramatic as Ian McEwan’s novel “Atonement as Alexander”

Tobias returns to the English manor of his former girlfriend, Anna — a now-married woman for whom he still hopefully and hopelessly pines — for what appears to be a casual family get-together.

When I saw Anna again I knew I loved her still. That I had never stopped loving her and that I would never stop loving her. And suddenly I felt a kind of grief for my life. It’s a

terrible thing, this, when you know your life has gone irrevocably wrong, and that, every day until the day you die, you will be confronted with the idea of an alternate life that you could have, should have, lived. There were moments that weekend when I felt suicidal. I felt that I should end my life now rather than live on with the torment of what might have been.

Anna’s family has fallen on hard times and hopes that Alexander will be able to help them out of a financial jam. When he arrives, Alexander realizes he’s previously met Anna’s husband and he’s not the successful, charming businessman he appears to be.

Even while that’s going on, Boyd complicates the story even further by revealing several devastating skeletons in the family’s closet.

All this in less than 20 pages; and, as you can see, it’s a plot that defies the one-sentence summary.

The characters, events and emotions of “Incandescence” are so rich and compelling, we secretly long to explore them in a longer work.

But here’s the catch: to turn “Incandescence” into a full-length book would flatten it out and make it just another pale, pudgy novel.

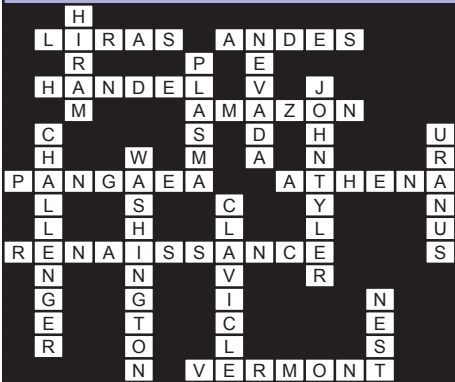
One word more, one word less and the multi-strand narrative Boyd has spun would crumple like a spider web in a hurricane.

Crossword

Across:

1. Beast of burden
4. Nugent or Kennedy
7. Greek goddess of marriage and birth
11. Mafia head honcho
12. When you might get there
13. Middle-eastern governor
14. Climbed up on
16. Sun beam
17. Not here anymore
18. Big finds
21. Popular show, “The ____”
23. “J”’s sandwich partner
25. International conflict
26. Canadian catchphrase
27. “Hero”’s Jet
28. Wise guy
30. That girl
33. Fairly frequently
36. Dwelling place
38. Furry TV extraterrestrial

Last issue’s solution



40. “All you need,” to some
41. Musical syllable
42. Like LOTR scenery
44. Samuel’s biblical mentor
45. Made up of mos.
46. “You,” Spanish
47. Alien home bases
53. Let (up)
56. Verse of praise
57. Stumble
58. Small container
59. “1,000,” Spanish
60. Military postal prefix
61. Check copy
62. Snake-like fish
63. Fisherman’s tool

Down:

1. Human prototype
2. Skywalker’s cohort
3. Tizzy
4. Scary things
5. “And others,” Lat.
6. “Banana Boat Song” refrain
7. Old biddies
8. Modern music genre
9. Famous canine ____ Tin
10. Exist
15. Became unfrozen
19. Buck’s mate

20. Canyon sound
22. Greasy spoon
23. One of David’s writings
24. Ali ____
27. McLean’s Chevy’s destination
29. “Monopoly” landmark
31. Half a laugh
32. Chicago trans. system
34. Pilot’s trip
35. ____ and fro
37. Outer prefix

39. “Old School” actor Will
43. Innard
47. Liquify
48. There’s no place like it
49. “Sopranos” Falco
50. Iraqi neighbor
51. Sherlock Holmes accessory
52. Detect
53. First mother
54. Help
55. South American monkey

